

Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System Historic District

Allen County, Indiana

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Description: This bridge is of concrete, engineer designed. The structure is a T-beam, similar to the type of design favored by the Indiana State Highway Commission in the decades following the turn of the century. A. W. Grosvenor and O. Darling are credited as the designers. The bridge was under the supervision of the county commissioners, Eli Slussman, Orin H. Lake, and A. J. Baker when it was constructed between 1926 and 1927, according to a dedicatory plaque. The bridge was rated eligible for the NRHP by Dr. Cooper in his publication, *Artistry and Ingenuity in Artificial Stone, Indiana's Concrete Bridges, 1900 - 1942*. This bridge was rated non-select in M&H Architecture, *Indiana Historic Bridge Inventory, Volume 3: Methodology to Identify Select and Non-Select Bridges (draft)*, based on a report by HNTB.<sup>44</sup> It originally had lighting.

	Site:	Building:	Structure:	Object:	FeatureHistoricDate:	FeatureMap:
Contributing:	0	0	1	0	1926-1927	i
Non-Contributing:	0	0	0	0		

Feature Name: Bridge over St. Joseph River (Ian M. Rolland Bridge) Feature Designers: A. W. Grosvenor/Herman Tapp, Construction Co.  
ST 6 Feature Resource Code / Number Characteristic: Buildings and Structures  
Description: This is a concrete arch bridge carrying State Boulevard over the St. Joseph River. The piers and substructure date from c. 1919 while the superstructure is new, c. 1975-1980. This is a former open spandrel concrete three span elliptical arch bridge with bull noses above the piers. The early substructure's open spandrels have been filled with concrete as part of the rehabilitation which produced a new, cast in place concrete superstructure and aluminum rails. There is a modern concrete plinth which contains the original bronze plaque for the bridge as well as a modern plaque on the east side of this stand.

	Site:	Building:	Structure:	Object:	FeatureHistoricDate:	FeatureMap:
Contributing:	0	0	1	0	1919/c. 1980	i
Non-Contributing:	0	0	0	0		

Resource Totals For: State Boulevard (Pfeifer)

	Site:	Building:	Structure:	Object:
Contributing:	0	0	4	2
Non-Contributing:	0	0	0	0

## Tennessee Avenue/Lake Avenue

Tennessee Avenue is shown on the Kessler map as a connecting artery between Lawton and Lakeside parks. One section of the road, going east from Lawton Park, contains large trees of the Red Oak and London Plane varieties. This portion of the roadway would have been here on or about Kessler's time. On the south side of the street in this locale is an early nineteenth century Greek Revival building, the Dr. Merchant W. Huxford house (an early Fort Wayne Mayor), built c. 1854 but now boarded up and in poor condition. East of this building, the homes on the south side are mostly post World War II, small box-like structures. On the north side, a large nineteenth century building, The Knight House -Fort Wayne Sanitarium, has been adapted to serve as a transitional living center (The Shepherd's House). A large, c. 1970s public housing complex can be seen adjacent. The street, however, has most of the boulevard elements we would expect in a Kessler-inspired boulevard. The trees are particularly striking.

Lake Avenue, which runs along the southern boundary of Lakeside Park between Delta Boulevard and the eastern edge of the park, serves as the continuation of Tennessee, in that it creates connectivity between Lakeside Park and Anthony Boulevard to the east. The block and a half of Lake Avenue which is east of the park has many of the qualities of a boulevard, except that the homes on the north, do not face the boulevard, but are located on the side streets. The rather modest homes on the south side face Lake Avenue.

## Features:

Feature Name:	Tennessee Ave	Feature Designers:	George Kessler
TL 1	Feature Resource Code / Number	Characteristic:	Buildings and Structures

<sup>44</sup> C. Fife, "Historic Property Report for State Boulevard Improvement Project", draft, completed 2009.

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Description: This records the boulevard right-of-way, including the street amenities, plantings, curbs and location.

Contributing: Site: 0 Building: 0 Structure: 1 Object: 0

FeatureHistoricDate: c. 1900

Non-Contributing: 0 0 0 0

FeatureMap: j

Feature Name: Tennessee Ave. Bridge over the St. Joseph River

Feature Designers: A. W. Grosvenor, Lafayette Engineering Co.

TL 2

Feature Resource Code / Number Characteristic:

Buildings and Structures

Description:

This is a brick and stone bridge, with decorative bronze and globe lighting. The bridge walls, of brick contain panels, and have alternating header and stretcher bond. The bridge has ornate, curved entryways, and the panels across are interrupted by stone piers. At two places these piers are raised, with a double stone base and hold the decorative lighting. The bridge has obviously been rehabilitated in recent years. There are modern, stone patterned concrete panels along the river side of St. Joseph Boulevard which crosses Tennessee immediately to the east of the bridge. The stone coping all along the bridge is dressed and is particularly fine. The bridge bears an incised date on a newer panel, 1912. This bridge is a two span, filled spandrel arch, constructed of a reinforced concrete, with brick cladding. The entrados is decorated with imitation dentils in concrete and brick.

Contributing: Site: 0 Building: 0 Structure: 1 Object: 0

FeatureHistoricDate: 1912

Non-Contributing: 0 0 0 0

FeatureMap: j

Feature Name: Lake Avenue east of Lakeside Park

Feature Designers: Kessler

TL 3

Feature Resource Code / Number

Characteristic:

Buildings and Structures

Description:

This is the small portion of Lake avenue which is located immediately to the east of Lakeside Park. It is separated from Tennessee by the park and has been so separated since at least Kessler's time. Its placement in this resource is because it makes the connection between Lakeside Park, Tennessee Avenue and Anthony Boulevards, completing the system. The road has several early twentieth century dwellings on the south side and a few plantings. In the half of the block that continues toward Anthony, several modest, one story store fronts c. 1910, can be seen. There is also a modern gas station and other businesses on this part of the block. Adjacent, to the west and part of Lakeside is the entrance to Forest Park NR district. The gateway is not in the Lake Avenue right of way and thus not a part of the Fort Wayne Park & Boulevard System Historic District, rather it is a part of the Forest Park NR district.

Contributing: Site: 0 Building: 0 Structure: 1 Object: 0

FeatureHistoricDate: c. 1911

Non-Contributing: 0 0 0 0

FeatureMap: J

Resource Totals For: Tennessee Ave/Lake Ave

Contributing: Site: 0 Building: 0 Structure: 3 Object: 0

Non-Contributing: 0 0 0 0

## Integrity

Throughout the previous descriptions of individual properties and resources, it has been our intention to indicate the integrity of a site, building, structure or object through the establishment of its rating as contributing or non-contributing to the district. Only those properties (Individual parks, boulevards and parkways with their related parks) which have been established as being present on the 1912 plan and/or envisioned as proposed OR the logical extension or realization of the recommendations, have been included in this nomination. Therefore, the issue of integrity becomes one of establishing an evaluation of whether or not the individual resource meets the tests.

In the case of Parks (and park features), they should retain (in the language of the Multiple Property Documentation Form) "or display the indications of, the historic features typically found in a Kessler era park (land use, trees, trails, roads, plantings, fountains, benches, lakes and river, bridges, etc.)...The historic function of the site should have integrity, including the feeling of the place. One should know that they are in a 'natural' setting...one should be able [to] hear birds singing and the wind rustling [through the] leaves." With regard to Boulevards, they should (and did)

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retain integrity of location, width and plantings (in particular, trees, and grass).<sup>45</sup> While many trees had suffered due to the impacts of disease or wind, the general location of these plantings, and in many cases, the individual species were intact. Some individual boulevards were found to achieve the ideal (100') width and thus provided good examples of the Kessler ideal. Others varied across their length and were evaluated as contributing overall if they achieved a majority of these characteristics. A key qualifying aspect of their integrity was location. Another quality which helped determine integrity was that of association, in particular if a boulevard was associated with institutions, and/or moderate to high-style residential development (parts of Anthony, State, Rudisill, Berry [west], and St. Joseph Boulevards.)

Parkways were determined to have integrity of location and for their role as green space if they were recommended on the 1912 and its logical extensions (Bennett, Parsons & Frost plan and later.) This is consistent with the language expressed in the MPDF.<sup>46</sup> In several cases, the modern realization of the parkway concept was a greenway, rather than a vehicular road. Such resources possessed the qualities of location, feeling, association, materials (the grassy banks and trees), and setting (relationship to the rivers.)

In a few cases, commemorative sites have been included in the nomination. A good example of such a site is the Old Fort Park. The resource only retains minimal qualities of feeling, materials, design and workmanship as a "park". However, as the remaining commemoration of the fort which gave the city its name, and a commemorative remnant of the first park (now reduced in acreage) in the city, it retains qualities of association and location. Several others, including a battlefield, and the locations of other early forts fall under this category and have similar qualities of integrity.

<sup>45</sup> Baas & Jones, P. 94.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Landscape Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

### Period of Significance

1909 – 1955

### Significant Dates

1909

1911-1912

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Bennett, Parsons & Frost

Hanna, Robert B.

Jaenicke, Adolph

Kessler, George

Robinson, Charles Mulford

Sheridan, Lawrence V.

Shurcliff, Arthur

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### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the date of the first city park and boulevard master plan, begun and elucidated by Charles Mulford Robinson. The report was accepted and printed in 1909 by the Board of Park Commissioners. It continues through the evolution of that plan and its further detailing by George Kessler and includes later updating by the firm of Bennett, Parsons & Frost, as well as influences of local planners. The period concludes in 1955, a time when the implementation of the Robinson/Kessler plan was essentially realized and the key elements were in place.

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Fort Wayne Park & Boulevard System Historic District is distinguished as an example of a comprehensive system developed during the early part of the twentieth century when City Beautiful ideals were transitioning to the concept of comprehensive city planning. Pioneered by Olmsted and Vaux in New York's Central park and by early boulevard and park systems, the field's development coincided with the activities in Fort Wayne. The district represents the culmination of comprehensive community planning efforts over a period of time in a private-public partnership which strove to meet the highest ideals then being put forward. It is nationally significant for its association with a master planner and a landscape architect who were key figures in the early city planning movement: Charles Mulford Robinson and George Kessler. In addition, components of the plan and additional park planning was accomplished by one of the great master landscape architects of the time, Arthur Shurcliff, who participated in projects in the community both at an early stage of his career and at the last.



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## **AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **National Register Criterion A:**

The Fort Wayne Park & Boulevard System is eligible under this criterion because it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Specifically, it is significant in Community Planning and Development because it represents Fort Wayne's efforts, over a long period of its history, to influence the physical structure of the community for the benefit of its citizens. It is also significant under this same area because, in the ultimate form of its development, it represents the first major comprehensive plan for the physical development of the urban environment in Fort Wayne arising out of and mirroring a national growth in the notion of comprehensive city planning. As an example of a covenant developed between city government and the public, it demonstrates an unusually high level of sophistication and cooperation. It is also significant as an example of public-private partnership co-existing for a comprehensive system of civic improvements over a long period of time.

It is significant under the area of Entertainment/Recreation as one of the most comprehensive efforts to provide adequate physical recreation space for all citizens, regardless of their location within the city or their social class.

### **National Register Criterion C:**

The Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System is eligible under this criterion because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type of community planning, originating in Europe and developed in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is also significant because it the combined work of several masters of American planning and Landscape Architecture and as such because it possesses high artistic values.

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Introductory note: The Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System was the subject of a Multiple Property Documentation Form, completed by Christopher Baas and Tina Jones with assistance from Malcolm Cairns for ARCH, Inc. Thus, based on National Park Service practice, salient aspects of that document have been summarized here and throughout the Statement of Significance.

## **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

### **Fort Wayne: Rooted in the Mists of Time**

Because of its unique location at the hub of three rivers, Fort Wayne has been the locus of human civilization for millennia. This spot has been a key location in the development of a transportation system for the interior of the continent. Geographical forces going back as far as one to one and a half billion years formed its character. By the end of the Dinosaur Age, about 65 million years ago, the tempestuous movements of tectonic plates in what would become the North American continent had slowed, as terrestrial climates began to cool. The Ice Age, from about two to three million to 10,000 years ago, brought advancing and retreating glaciers. These shaped the landforms which would eventually cradle Fort Wayne and northern Indiana. The waters created river valleys, streams, runs and wetlands. They deposited sediments in what we now call moraines. These ridges of earth and stone sculpted the land, giving it the forms we know today. Of the five moraines in Indiana, the Fort Wayne Moraine is the most easterly.

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The landscape of Fort Wayne was first created as the result of this glacial drainage and deposition. The St. Joseph River, which drains south from Michigan, along the Fort Wayne Moraine, merges with the St. Mary's River which drains north from central Ohio. This unique convergence, at Fort Wayne's historic center becomes the headwaters of the Maumee River which flows northeasterly to Lake Erie and connects the area to the entire Great Lakes system. The interconnection of these waters formed a cradle for pre-historic as well as historic civilization.

Indiana's other great river system, the Wabash and Ohio, is separated from Fort Wayne by morainal deposits. The modern headwaters of the Wabash are located south and east of Fort Wayne. The shortest distance to a connection with the Wabash River, leading to the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, is through a short "portage" in the Fort Wayne area. This sluiceway, a generous accident of geography, further enhanced the ancient site because it provided interconnection to a vast network of riverine transportation. Located at a high point, and at the junction of three physiographic regions in Indiana, Fort Wayne was an ideal location for human occupation. Because of this it nurtured historic events which helped shape the future United States for more than 400 years.<sup>47</sup>

The earliest Native Americans, living about 10,000 years before the present time were known as Paleoindians. These peoples were hunter gatherers, dependent on the game and vegetation, often found near large streams and other water sources. In the Fort Wayne area, the Miami tribes eventually settled in the confluence area, including their subtribes, the Wea, Piankashaw, and others. During this long period of time, until the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, these native peoples found the quickest connection between the Great Lakes system to the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers was through the Maumee-Wabash Sluiceway, or "Portage" as the French later called it.

### **European Contact in the Fort Wayne Area**

Sources differ regarding the date of the first European penetration into the area that would become Fort Wayne. But the French were certainly moving through this region in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Some indicate that Samuel de Champlain explored the Maumee River area as early as 1614 or 1615, others believe that the first French traveler was Sieur de la Salle, who passed through the northwest corner of Indiana in 1679. It seems certain that the first white settlement in the future Fort Wayne was a French fort established in 1686 on the east bank of the St. Mary's River. Occupied until 1750, it was thought to be located north of present day Greeley Street near Superior. The French had sought to establish religious as well as trade settlements in the New World around the Great Lakes. But by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century, the British had begun to defeat their hopes. In Fort Wayne, the second French fort, probably located on the left bank of the St. Joseph River was defeated by the British in 1763.

As the battle for United States freedom from Britain waged in the east during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the site which would become Fort Wayne grew to be an active trade center. It had a distinctly French character into the first decade of the nineteenth century. Native American and European settlements were dotted around the rivers, including Kekionga (Miamitown), and Le Gris, villages established by the Miami. Two others had been established by the Shawnee tribe and three by the Delaware. During the first few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, villages were established in the area by the Potawatomi and the Miami village of Richardville was founded.

<sup>47</sup> C. Baas, T. Jones, "The Civilizing of a Midwestern City", MPDF, Pp. 12-15.

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### General Anthony Wayne and the Founding of Fort Wayne

A bronze plaque, set in a boulder on present day Clay Street, north of East Berry, proclaims the site of the first American fort to be established here. It was constructed in 1794 and lasted until 1800. According to a nineteenth century historian, it contained a military cemetery. A second fort was built in 1800 which included gardens.<sup>48</sup> Old Fort Park continues to commemorate these early forts, with a small, commemorative park, the oldest in the system, established in 1863.

The man who was the namesake of these forts, as well as the town which followed, was a Revolutionary War officer, trusted by George Washington and capable of inspiring men by his bravery. His greatest achievement was a brilliant victory at Stony Point in 1779, followed by his contribution to the British defeat at Yorktown in 1781. Wayne retired to civilian life in 1783, but following the American General Arthur St. Clair's humiliating defeat in 1791, and Harmar's defeat on the Maumee and St. Joseph Rivers the year before, he was asked by Washington in 1792 to head up the Legion of the United States. St. Clair had been vanquished by Indians led by Chief Little Turtle at Miami Village near present day Fort Wayne.

In 1787, Congress had passed the Northwest Ordinance, which opened vast tracts of land in the present-day Midwest to American settlement. Perhaps as many as 10,000 settlers per year flocked to the Ohio Valley. The advancing settlements encountered violent reactions from the Native Americans. As clamor for protection increased, the new government faced a crisis, turned critical with St. Clair's defeat. By 1793, negotiations with the Indians had broken down and General Wayne was dispatched to prepare for battle. Moving from a fort 75 miles north of Cincinnati, he moved north and west in 1794, establishing forts along the way and defeating Native American forces. Wayne confronted hostile Indians at Fallen Timbers, just south of present-day Toledo, Ohio and earned a resounding victory. Fleeing Indians were turned away at nearby Fort Miami, a British-held stronghold, their former allies fearing war with the United States. By 1795, the Treaty of Greenville established peace between the Indian tribes in the area and legitimized the region as American territory.

In October of 1794, just two months after General Wayne's decisive battle, Fort Wayne was established at the confluence of the St. Joseph, St. Mary's and Maumee Rivers. It was the first American fort in what would become Fort Wayne and was built under the leadership of Captain John Hamtramck. Wayne's victory ended the power of the British on American soil, strengthened the new government and opened vast lands for American settlement. After a brief celebration in Philadelphia, Wayne returned to the frontier in 1796 overseeing the surrender of British forts. Late that year he contracted gout and died at the early age of 51.<sup>49</sup> Not the least among his many contributions to American history was his establishment of Fort Wayne, as an early outpost in the Northwest Territory.

Fort Wayne honors this founding General with an equestrian statue, now located in downtown. It was formerly located at present day Nuckols (formerly Hayden) park. Incidentally, the General earned his nickname "Mad Anthony" for his temper, not his temperament. He was known for his attention to troop discipline and fancy dress as well as bravery (see Figure 6.)<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. Pp. 17-18

<sup>49</sup> Richard Battin, *News Sentinel*, Fort Wayne, quoted in:  
[www.earlyamerica.com/review/fall96/FTbio-Wayne.html](http://www.earlyamerica.com/review/fall96/FTbio-Wayne.html);  
<http://americanrevwar.homestead.com/files/wayne.html> and  
[www.nps.gov/vafo/historyculture/wayne.html](http://www.nps.gov/vafo/historyculture/wayne.html).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.



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## Town Beginnings

With Native American threats appeased by the Greenville Treaty, American settlers continued to populate the Northwest Territory. This immense area, which includes the present-day states of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and parts of Wisconsin, offered opportunities for speculators as well as pioneers. The National Survey, which had been undertaken to establish an orderly rectangular grid system – a necessity for development – had begun in Ohio. Lands in Indiana, however, often overlaid this system over older plats developed by the French, or laid out as “grant” lands for returning Revolutionary War veterans. Precise boundaries and locations were soon available, encouraging land purchase. Because of the great forested lands in this region, and the lack of good roads, river transportation was often the first and foremost way that pioneers found the new land. For this reason, the southern part of the state developed early, along the Ohio River, as well as parts which were accessible via its tributary, the Wabash River. But Fort Wayne also had the advantage of riverways. Even with this trade boost, long negotiations for tribal lands, from 1795 to c. 1840 resulted in little American settlement until the 1820s.

Between the establishment of Fort Wayne in 1794 and 1819, a colorful amalgam of cultures populated the settlement, which served as a military post, a trading center for French, British and American traders as well as the Miami Indians. Indian agents represented the American government and administered treaties. During the War of 1812, Indians burned and plundered all the cabins clustered around and outside the fort. To further discourage immigrants, Fort Wayne was isolated, surrounded during those early decades by dense forests. After the close of the war, by 1819, the military had abandoned the post and the land was surveyed for future sales.<sup>51</sup> At the same time, the Northwest Territory had begun to divide into individual states. Ohio became a state in 1803, but Indiana wouldn’t follow suit until 1816, a time when most of northern Indiana was still tribal land.

## Early Community Planning

By 1820, one year after the military presence had left, a post office was established in Fort Wayne. In 1822, President Monroe authorized the sale of lands around the old fort and in 1823 the U.S. Land Office opened its unused buildings. It was charged with selling off all of the lands which had been released by treaty from Indian title. By 1824, two enterprising land speculators, John Barr, a merchant from Baltimore, Maryland and John McCorkle of Piqua, Ohio had purchased the first tract of land – known today as the Original Plat of Fort Wayne (Barr was the major contributor of funds to the venture.) Located in the center of present-day downtown, it was a rectangular plat, south of the St. Mary’s River and its confluence with the St. Joseph River. It was located west of the site of the American forts.<sup>52</sup>

The Land Survey of 1785 dictated a rigid system based on a strict north-south, east-west grid. When one views the orientation of the streets in downtown Fort Wayne, (See Figure 13, Sanborn Map, 1885) it is obvious that the older portion of the town has been skewed slightly northeast-southwest. The lower portion of the town, south of Jefferson/Lewis streets aligns to the cardinal points, according to typical survey practice. Sources disagree about the reason for this change, but it seems likely that the streets were aligned in a somewhat harmonious way with the course of the river, perhaps to make it easier to construct a proposed canal near the river. A preliminary analysis of such

<sup>51</sup> B.J. Griswold, *History of Fort Wayne and Allen County, Volume 1*. Chicago: Robert O. Law Company.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, and “Fort Wayne History”, [www.cityoffortwayne.org/fort-wayne-history.html](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/fort-wayne-history.html), also Baas & Jones, MPDF, p. 20.

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a route was undertaken in 1819. Two original plat streets are named for DeWitt Clinton and John C. Calhoun; in 1824 both were nationally-known supporters of canal development.<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand, it is obvious that the (approximately) north-south streets would have the opportunity to open to the river, thus providing views to this feature. Whatever the rationale, Charles Mulford Robinson was pleased with the result when he studied the community in 1909, commenting on the relationship between the rivers and the streets: "...the general north and east direction of their flow [*the rivers*] is so nearly in harmony with a compass-laid parallelogram of streets."<sup>54</sup>

The Original Plat was a compact plan with the north west corner of the long rectangle located at the corner of present day Calhoun and Superior (formerly Water) Streets. It continued eastward to include Clinton Street and end at Barr Street. From there, the edge of the plat continued south along Barr to an alley south of Wayne Street and then continued westward to Calhoun and north to complete the rectangle. The area encompassed, from north to south, the modern streets of Superior, Columbia, Main, Berry and Wayne. By the end of the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the town was positioned to prosper, if it could find a way to interconnect goods from the countryside with large markets along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Since the advent of steam boats along these rivers in 1811, Indiana and other Midwest territories were growing rapidly. Fort Wayne businessmen sought the same benefit.

### Canal Times

In 1817, work first began on America's most famous and successful inland canal, Governor De Witt Clinton's Erie Canal. Despite doom-saying critics, the 362 mile waterway, completed from Buffalo to Albany, New York in 1825 became hugely profitable. Two decades before, canal enthusiasts in Indiana had unsuccessfully tried to organize an effort for a canal in the south, to bypass the treacherous "Falls of the Ohio in the Hoosier state. That effort failed, largely because of its association with the notorious Aaron Burr. A second effort, after several years of fruitless wrangling also failed. The much-sought-after canal was ultimately completed, not in Indiana, but across the river in Kentucky in 1831.<sup>55</sup>

In the 1820s, encouraged by the New York canal and efforts in Ohio to the east, momentum began to gather for a canal connecting Indiana to the system in Ohio and ultimately to the Great Lakes. The Wabash and Erie Canal, ultimately the longest at 468 miles of the various American inland canals, was granted federal lands for funding in 1827. Surveyors tramped the wild lands between the mouth of the Auglaize River on the Maumee to the Tippecanoe River on the Wabash. By 1832, the Indiana legislature had finally authorized a massive improvements act to fund the canal (and other huge projects). On a chilly day in February of 1832, Fort Wayne's first lawyer, Charles Wayne Ewing, provided the oration for the ceremony held before the town's several hundred citizens. Samuel Hanna was a prominent citizen promoting a canal for Fort Wayne (and he would later be a key player in attracting the railroad.) Today, Hanna Street is a reminder of his contributions to the community.

A young engineer, Jesse Lynch Williams was placed in charge of the daunting task.<sup>56</sup> Williams would be remembered in later years through a commemorative park. The canal would have an abiding and positive effect on Fort Wayne, linking it to major markets to the north, from Lake Erie to

<sup>53</sup> C. Smith, notes provided to the nomination, May, 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *Report of Charles Mulford Robinson for Fort Wayne Civic Improvement Association*, Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Printing Co., 1909, P. 13.

<sup>55</sup> Paul Fatout, *Indiana Canals*. W. Lafayette, IN: Purdue Univ. Press, 1972, Pp. 1-21.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, Pp. 52-55.

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the Erie Canal as well as to the south, via the Wabash and Ohio Rivers. Fort Wayne was the primary beneficiary for the canal system in Indiana, and the location of its inception. By 1835 the first section, from Fort Wayne to Huntington, Indiana was completed.<sup>57</sup>

The Wabash and Erie Canal flowed through the center of the downtown, south of the rivers. It exited in the west, first crossing the St. Mary's River via an aqueduct, then widening and running northwesterly until it intersected a feeder canal. The latter brought water from the upper St. Joseph River six miles to the north, a necessity because of the higher elevation of Fort Wayne (thus its nickname, "Summit City".) The canal turned south west at the point where the feeder canal entered (see Figures 12 and 13.) Both the canal and the feeder canal were engineering marvels in a day when construction was managed by men, horses and mules. By 1843, when the Ohio link made the connection to Lake Erie, Fort Wayne began to thrive.<sup>58</sup>

### Railroad Enthusiasm

The population of Fort Wayne spurted from about 1,500 in 1840 to an amazing 10,388 by 1860.<sup>59</sup> The canal began this surge, but the advent of the railroad swiftly replaced it. The first steam locomotive arrived in the 1850s. Quickly rail lines bisected the city, first in the south, then, ultimately usurping parts of the canal route (abandoned in the 1880s.) Six rail lines traversed through Fort Wayne in 1880, two of them national lines. A third, the New York, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad (built on abandoned canal right-of-way) entered the city from the east. It continued through town, bisecting it south of the Maumee and St. Mary's Rivers. It left the city in the west, only three blocks north of Swinney Park. The line hindered north-south traffic and visually cut off the rivers from the downtown.<sup>60</sup> This inconvenience mattered little to local entrepreneurs. By 1880 the industrial revolution was underway and Fort Wayne was an adventurous participant. Eventually, community planners would seek to mitigate some of the environmental effects of this burgeoning growth -- but not for many years to come. In 1880 Fort Wayne was the third largest city in the state, after Evansville (a major southern river port) and Indianapolis, the state capital, just beating out another river canal city, Terre Haute. By 1890, with a population of 35,393, her position as the third largest city in the state was well established.<sup>61</sup>

Travel within the city, and to other urban centers became faster and easier with the advent of the interurban. Street railways in Fort Wayne had begun as early as 1872 with the first horse drawn street car. It proved popular with both users and investors. In 1892, the electric rail car replaced the horse drawn trolley. Interurban lines were initiated between 1902 and 1907. By 1914 there were 6 lines in Fort Wayne with a total mileage of 46.08. These routes began and ended at the central terminal downtown on West Main between Webster and Ewing.<sup>62</sup> The comparative speed, comfort and convenience of the interurban lines meant that one could ride instead of walk to work. This marvel engendered the growth of "streetcar" suburbs, in areas slightly removed from the core of the city.

<sup>57</sup> Baas & Jones, MPDF, p. 22

<sup>58</sup> Polk's 1885 Map of Fort Wayne, and Baas & Jones, MPDF, p. 23.

<sup>59</sup> Baas & Jones, P. 24 and Logan Esarey, *A History of Indiana From 1850 to the Present, Volume II*, Indianapolis, IN: B. F. Bowen & Co., 1918, P. 979.

<sup>60</sup> Baas & Jones, P. 25.

<sup>61</sup> Esary, P. 979.

<sup>62</sup> Baas & Jones, Pp. 32 - 33.

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## Transportation and growth

The history of Fort Wayne's community planning and development has been greatly influenced by the major transportation arteries which were present or developed within her boundaries. From the years before European contact, the rivers tied cultures together, interconnecting tribes and peoples between the great waterways of the continent. During the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, traffic still moved best along these riverways, since roads through the densely forest land were few, and difficult to traverse. Hope surged during the early decades of the latter century that man-made waterways, canals, would improve travel, and trade with larger markets to the east and west. For a while this was the case, until a more advanced technology, the steam railroad offered faster, cheaper and easier travel for goods and people.

During this evolution, Fort Wayne survived and prospered, perhaps because of the seminal geography her rivers and her location offered. The transition between canal and rail was comparatively smooth. As the late nineteenth century industrial age dawned, the city could look back to her past - and begin to learn new ways to plan for the future.

During the twentieth century, more sophisticated planning ideas would emerge in this northeastern Indiana metropolis. Some of the finest practitioners of the art of "Civic Improvement" would be attracted to the town by a cadre of far-sighted, community minded citizen planners. Their biggest challenge would be to restore ancient ties to the riverine culture which lay at the heart of the physical city, while meeting the growing demands of the automobile.

As the automobile came of age in the 1920s, Americans became enthusiastic for good roads, and for amenities along these roads to serve a growing population of travelers. Out of this effort, the Lincoln Highway was borne. The idea of the Lincoln Highway came from the fertile mind of Carl Fisher, the man also responsible for the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Miami Beach. With help from fellow industrialists Frank Seiberling and Henry Joy, an improved, hard-surfaced road was envisioned that would stretch almost 3400 miles from coast to coast, New York to San Francisco, over the shortest practical route. The Lincoln Highway Association was created in 1913 to promote the road using private and corporate donations. The idea was embraced by an enthusiastic public, and many other named roads across the country followed. The Federal Highway Administration and the Interstate Highway System are the culmination of these efforts.<sup>63</sup>

In Indiana, the Lincoln Highway traveled through Fort Wayne, then continued west to South Bend. The Lincoln Highway Bridge recalls this famous roadway in this nomination (SM-13).

## CIVIC IMPROVEMENT IN FORT WAYNE

### A Need for Green

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, as the effects of industrialization became apparent in Fort Wayne, local government and concerned citizens began finding ways to add a bit of natural green, in the form of city parks, to the landscape. At mid-century, New York City had led the way toward urban parks with Olmsted and Vaux's magnificent plans for Central Park, a rural green space in the midst of a city. But the notion of a large public park in an urban center can be found much earlier in the United States. The Boston Common, a pasture in the middle of the town, was set aside in 1630. Many towns were platted with a public square near the center of town. Often, as in the case of Fort Wayne, this was a green area surrounding the court house. In many cases, early cemeteries, often at the edge of town, served to relax and refresh the population. Mt. Auburn

<sup>63</sup> [www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/info/](http://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/info/) - accessed June, 2010.



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Cemetery in Boston, founded in 1831, is one of the oldest such landscapes. Today its 175 beautiful, peaceful acres are in the center of a metropolis, but when it was founded, it was a rural site, slightly apart from the heart of the city.<sup>64</sup> Lindenwood Cemetery, established in 1859-1860 in Fort Wayne was an early recreational and green space. Located at the far edge of the city, it could be reached by the canal and towpath.

### Health Benefits

Connecting the populace with nature was associated with improved health. But in the mid-nineteenth century, the notion of developing public land for such uses was new. In arguing for Central Park, A. J. Downing and William Cullen Bryant warned against the "corrupt atmosphere generated in hot and crowded streets". They stressed the need for such facilities to improve the health of the working man and families.<sup>65</sup> The great landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted saw the industrialized city as a threat to the health of its human inhabitants, stating that in, "the interior parts of large and closely built towns, [pollution] carries into the lungs highly corrupt and irritating matters ... The irritation and waste of the physical powers ... very seriously affect the mind and the moral strength."<sup>66</sup> To counter this appalling situation, the urban park would provide "breathing places".<sup>67</sup> For Olmsted, the public park was a place for everyone in the city, not just the privilege of the rich, or for special interests. He recommended the cooling effects of ponds and trees for families stuck in the cities during the dog days of summer (when infant/child mortality increased sharply), saying, "the best that can be done is to spend an occasional day or part of a day in the Park. It has been for some years a growing practice with physicians to advise this course."<sup>68</sup>

A tradition of private patronage and support of city parks began in Fort Wayne with the donation by Henry M. Williams of the site of the first Fort Wayne. Mr. Williams had purchased the property for \$800 and gave it to the city in 1863. Other public parks were created in the next two decades. During the latter years of the nineteenth century, important citizens of Fort Wayne generously donated land for public parks, to enhance the health and life of the city. When, in December of 1874, Colonel Thomas W. Swinney willed 61 acres for a park in Fort Wayne, he specified that it was "to remain open and free to the public as pleasure grounds improved and beautified under the direction [of the City of Fort Wayne]. He died in 1875 and that year the Common Council named the land in the bend of the St. Mary's River "Swinney Park".<sup>69</sup> In addition to Swinney Park, Northside (Lawton) Park, Hayden Park and McCulloch Park were also the beneficiaries of generous donations. The city of Fort Wayne and its concerned citizens thus began a tradition of patronage and collaboration which would continue over the years, to the benefit of all of the community.

Ingenuity also played a part during the late nineteenth century. In a happy combination of engineering, public works and park development, Reservoir Park was created. It made a pleasure

<sup>64</sup> Baas & Jones, Pp. 50-52. <http://www.mountauburn.org/>

<sup>65</sup> Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land*. Cambridge, MA; The Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1971.

<sup>66</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted, *Public parks and the Enlargement of Towns: Read before the American Social Science Association at the Lowell Institute, Boston, Feb. 25, 1879*, Quoted in: William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University press., 1989, Pp 16, 17.

<sup>67</sup> Wilson, P. 17.

<sup>68</sup> Eugene Kinkead, *Central Park, 1857 - 1995, The Birth, Decline, and Renewal of a National Treasure*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990, P. 38.

<sup>69</sup> Patricia O'Donnell, *Heritage Landscapes, Cultural Landscape Report for Swinney Park*, P. I.2



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ground out of the area surrounding a massive elevated water tank which provided gravity-fed water pressure to the whole city – an amazing feat!

But challenges to health in late nineteenth century cities were numerous, including air-borne pollution from factories, open dumping and sewage discharge into rivers and streams. Dense, crowded conditions created a lack of sunlight and sanitation in housing, while workers labored in poorly lit factories for interminably long hours. Massive immigration meant that new populations were moving into urban areas all around the country. Fort Wayne was no exception from these woes. In particular, planners and citizens were concerned about the conditions along the three rivers which were at the heart of the city.

### Park Department Beginnings

During the decades after the Civil War, the population continued to grow, intensifying concerns for traffic, and for the health of their citizens. By 1894, a Park Department had been formed, under the aegis of the Board of Public Works. Fort Wayne saw the first park report as "Annual Reports of Head of Directors." Shortly, Colonel David N. Foster a well-respected local citizen, headed a committee to investigate the formation of a municipal park board. Colonel Foster eventually became known as the father of the Fort Wayne Park System because of his continuing dedication to this effort. His credo: That Fort Wayne should have a city park within a 10 minute walk of every home.<sup>70</sup>

By 1896 August W. Goers had been appointed the first park Superintendent. Under his direction, Lawton, Swinney, Reservoir, McCulloch, Hayden, Weisser and Lakeside parks were developed. Park planning during this period reflected similar patterns going on in other cities around America. Single park development was the primary focus, often within the context of a public-private collaboration. This was occurring in Fort Wayne as well. The contribution of the Swinney and Williams families are good examples. But within a decade, thanks to the efforts of David Foster and others, the city decided to form a separate, municipal park board. By 1905, this was a reality. Due to the passage of enabling legislation by the state legislature, the Board of Park Commissioners was formed, independent of the city Board of Public Works. August Goers was chosen as the first Superintendent, serving both before and after the Park Board was established.<sup>71</sup>

### Fort Wayne's Board of Park Commissioners.

When the Cities and Towns law, enacted by the state legislature made it possible to create a separate Board of Park Commissioners, a door was opened to new ideas and administration for the parks. When the first board was formed in 1905, Colonel David N. Foster served as its inaugural president. The board was comprised of four individuals, two from each party. In a 1956 report celebrating fifty years of the Fort Wayne Park System, then Mayor Robert E. Meyers commented: "The vision and determination of Colonel Foster quickly influenced many others. The records of our Park Boards ... have shown a continuing list of accomplishments for the benefit of the public without trace of political influence. This fact has been widely recognized by state and national authorities in the field of Parks and Recreation."<sup>72</sup>

The first Board included David N. Foster, who helped frame the act under which the department was first organized. The other three were Oscar W. Tresselt, Ferdinand Meier and

<sup>70</sup> Department of Parks & Recreation History, quoted in O'Donnell: *Cultural Landscape Report for Weisser Park*, Appendix A.2.

<sup>71</sup> Kathy Pargmann, "History" Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department Web site - [www.fortwayneparks.org](http://www.fortwayneparks.org)

<sup>72</sup> Department of Parks & Recreation History, and Board of Park Commissioners, *1956 Annual Report*, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

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Joseph M. Singmaster. Foster and his brother, entrepreneur, banker and manufacturer, Samuel M. Foster would later donate the land for a large and idyllic park in the south west section of town. Foster Park is still today an enduring memorial to two public-spirited citizens who made it possible. Colonel David Foster would continue to serve on the Board of Park Commissioners from 1905 to 1922 and from 1926 until his death in 1934. The parks of Fort Wayne were established and continued to prove an outstanding example of public-private partnership, as well as a tribute to the generosity of private philanthropy. The early years of the Park Board, between 1905 and 1909 would lead to a new "Civic Awakening" and the work of Charles Mulford Robinson and George Kessler.

### Inspiration for a Comprehensive System

Between the early efforts to build individual parks in the late nineteenth century and the establishment of a separate Board of Park Commissioners, Americans experienced an amazing shift of ideas and inspiration which would greatly affect Fort Wayne, as well as other cities. In 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition was held in Chicago. This extraordinary event, under the able direction of Chicago architect Daniel Burnham and the legendary landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, showed America and the world that this country had come of age. It hearkened back to classical architecture to create a clean, beautiful and world-class "White City". It physically illustrated what a city could be – how all of its elements could be organized into a plan, linking parks and transportation as well as natural features. Designated areas for a city center, for residential, commercial and industrial districts were featured. This exposition exerted a major cultural influence all across the nation. A new inspiration for classical architecture (but with a definite American interpretation) can be traced to this seminal event.

More than 21 million people visited this celebration of Christopher Columbus' famous journey of discovery. The huge popularity of this event meant that people all over the country experienced a new awareness of what a clean, well-designed and well-managed city could be. It was a huge contrast to the smelly, dirty, crowded and soot-blackened experience most city-dwellers had to accommodate. The World's Columbian Exposition did not "create" a movement toward more beautiful cities, but it helped to coalesce activities, thoughts and aesthetic expressions that had been growing for several decades. As one noted planner remarked: "the Fair represented the culmination of a period of over twenty years' activity in the sanitary and aesthetic improvement of cities..."<sup>73</sup> Prominent local citizens were not unaware of these events. The Pennsylvania Railroad served as an interstate connector, from the east, through Fort Wayne, to Chicago.

### Layers of Planning

Fort Wayne's "Civic Awakening" by all accounts began in 1909 and continued through 1915.<sup>74</sup> During these years enthusiasm for the City Beautiful movement was growing around the country. A defining moment for the people of Fort Wayne, who had lobbied hard to achieve it, was the legislation which had created, in 1905, the Parks as a separate department. Those who had been reading about the growing enthusiasm for "Civic Improvement" espoused by Robinson and others could begin to see this benefit coming to the streets and parks of Fort Wayne. Those who had

<sup>73</sup> Thomas Adams, *Outline of Town and City Planning: A Review of Past Efforts and Modern Aims*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1935, p. 173 (Quoted in William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press., 1989, p. 57.

<sup>74</sup> Bert Joseph Griswold, *The Pictorial History of Fort Wayne, Indiana*:...p. 546.

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marveled at the wonders of the great Columbian Exposition could finally have a chance to hope for great advances in their home city.

To the south, Indiana's capital city, Indianapolis, had begun to discuss a comprehensive plan along the lines of the ones seen in Kansas City, and of course at the Fair, but nothing had yet come of their venture.<sup>75</sup> Although undoubtedly aware of Indianapolis' ambitions, Fort Wayne's leaders would build their own, unique plan effort. It would involve a layered approach, with each step building upon the one before. It began with an effort sponsored by the locally powerful Commercial Club headed by Howell C. Rockhill, Charles H. Worden, Robert B. Hanna and others. Hanna would have been familiar with the pioneering work being accomplished by George Kessler in Kansas City, since he was married to a niece of William Rockhill Nelson, one of Kessler's patrons in that city.<sup>76</sup> Hanna was also a grandson of Judge Samuel Hanna, an icon in Fort Wayne history (remembered by Hanna Street today.)<sup>77</sup> The grandson would also contribute to "civic betterment" throughout a long career of involvement and leadership in the planning and development of Fort Wayne's Park and Boulevard System.

They began by inviting Charles Zueblin to come to the city for a week giving lectures every afternoon and evening "on subjects pertaining to civic affairs."<sup>78</sup> It is interesting that they would choose this particular speaker at this time. Charles Zueblin was a University of Chicago sociologist and by all accounts he was a dynamic speaker. Thus the planners chose an individual who would be able to mesmerize audiences with his rhetoric. He would set the stage for further activity, win friends in the public sector and smooth the way for other actions. At a time when public rhetoric was still a popular entertainment, that week in 1909 must have been incredibly stimulating and exciting. But Zueblin was more than just an entertaining speaker. At the time that he came to Fort Wayne he was also the president of the American League for Civic Improvement (ALCI), an organization that had been founded in 1902 out of the Chautauqua movement and a 1900 meeting in Springfield, Ohio. In an address to that first meeting in 1902, Zueblin credited the 1893 Fair as a "pivotal year" and stated: "no city should be content with anything less than a comprehensive plan..."<sup>79</sup>

With the ground tilled by Zueblin, and a far-sighted, powerful Park Board to support their efforts (along with other important local organizations), the stage was set for the appearance in Fort Wayne of the noted author and planner, Charles Mulford Robinson. Robinson was a colleague of Zueblin, having served as secretary of the ALCI. It is interesting that Robinson was chosen to prepare a plan for Fort Wayne at about the same time that George Kessler, a landscape architect/engineer was doing a similar chore in Indianapolis. But Kessler was primarily concerned with the business of design and engineering, while Robinson was also a prominent spokesman for the newly emerging field of City Planning and especially the City Beautiful movement. Robinson was brought to Fort Wayne by the Fort Wayne Civic Improvement Association, an interesting and locally active

<sup>75</sup> James R. O'Day, "George Edward Kessler and the Indianapolis park System: A study of its Historical Development During the City Beautiful Era, 1895-1915" MSHP Thesis, Ball State University, Muncie, IN, 1988: Indianapolis leaders invited Joseph Earnshaw (1894) and Frederick law Olmsted (1895) to make reports but legal disputes in 1897 left Indianapolis with a disconnected collection of parks until 1909.

<sup>76</sup> Angie Quinn, notes provided for this nomination to WGI, May, 2010.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., P. 546, 513.

<sup>78</sup> Robert B. Hanna, *Report to Fort Wayne City Plan Commission, Visualizing A Great River Park*, Robert B. Hanna, Fort Wayne, Indiana, March, 1929.

<sup>79</sup> Charles Zueblin, *A Decade of Civic Improvement*, Address to the 1902 Meeting of the ALCI. Quoted in Wilson, P. 48.

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organization whose officers and executive committee included Charles H. Worden, Robert B. Hanna, Samuel M. Foster and other local leaders.<sup>80</sup>

Fort Wayne was at the vanguard of a new, emerging professional movement for city planning and the direction this movement would take in the city was still in flux. A clear directive regarding the means, methods and most of all, philosophy had not been formed. In 1909, two titans of the movement were struggling in New York for philosophical control. According to author and planner, Jon A. Peterson, the birth of organized city planning occurred between 1909 and 1910, with the clash between Benjamin C. Marsh and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (the namesake of pioneer landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.) Marsh was a feisty, idealistic activist with the Committee on Congestion of Population in New York. His battle cry was "justice to the working population", and he brought near-religious zeal to social justice advocacy much like that which undergirded Progressive Era reform.<sup>81</sup>

Olmsted also held strong convictions about American planning. As a planning pioneer, he had worked within the City Beautiful movement, joining Daniel Burnham at the Chicago World's Fair and on Washington DC's comprehensive McMillen Plan. In addition, he had served as landscape architect for the Boston metropolitan park system, one of the most sophisticated in the nation. By 1909 he had been instrumental in the preparation of three city plans with two more in process.

Olmsted and Marsh were involved in the planning of two national conferences on City Planning, one in 1909 and one in 1910. Ultimately, Olmsted took over the second conference, ousting the more radical Marsh. Olmsted wanted "to develop city planning as a field of knowledge, not to mount a national campaign of social reform." In this he succeeded. He advocated that the movement should illuminate "the connections which link the planning of all the diverse elements of the physical city together." Because of this triumph, Olmsted has been credited as the father of city planning. His philosophy and his approach supported main stream planning, working for a better-ordered more livable city with established local powers.<sup>82</sup> In this, he was squarely in the court of the Fort Wayne city fathers. He was also steeped in the milieu so eloquently crafted by Charles Mulford Robinson (although Olmsted later stressed process over expertly designed plans.)

## CHARLES MULFORD ROBINSON

### Poet and Planner

Born in 1869, Charles Mulford Robinson was a young man, only two years out of college, when he experienced the 1893 Fair. He had graduated from the University of Rochester, in upstate New York and was an editor on the *Rochester Post-Express* at the time of the great fair. He authored an article, "The Fair as Spectacle", a description and history of the Columbian Exposition which was issued by its Board of Directors in Chicago. Robinson's career as a journalist included a stint in 1904 as an editor at *The Philadelphia Ledger*, then at *The Municipal Journal* in New York City. A prolific writer, he was also a regular contributing editor over the years of *The Survey*, *the Architectural Record* and the *Boston Transcript*.<sup>83</sup>

Robinson began to write about "Civic Aesthetics", notably in a series of articles for the prestigious national publication, *Atlantic Monthly* in 1899. These articles led to a long career as the most articulate and persuasive spokesman for efforts to improve planning in American cities. Shortly

<sup>80</sup> Dedicatory page, Robinson's Report of 1909 (Printed 1910)

<sup>81</sup> Jon A. Peterson, "The Birth of Organized City Planning in the United States, 1909-1910", *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 75, No. 2, Spring 2009.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, p. 129.

<sup>83</sup> *Landscape Architecture (ASLA)* 9, (July 1919):190, "Charles Mulford Robinson, Associate Member, A Minute on his Life and Service, p. 93.



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after their appearance, he was invited by *Harper's Magazine* to go abroad and prepare a similar series on municipal development in Europe. His travels and observations accumulated much more material than could be incorporated into these articles. He generated his first book in 1901, extolling his ideas. It was so successful that, in 1903 he enlarged upon it, with a new addition, called *Modern Civic Art, or the City Made Beautiful*. Within a year, this term had become a byword for a new approach to the development of cities. The "City Beautiful" movement had its spokesman. Robinson was hailed abroad by the *Westminster Gazette*, as "a leader of a new school of prophets."<sup>84</sup>

From his beginnings as a journalist, then as an eloquent voice for civic planning, Robinson rapidly built an international reputation. He was called upon to analyze civic problems and prepare extensive reports, first for Buffalo, then for an amazing list of cities (at least 30 by his untimely death in 1917 at the age of 49.) In addition, he completed seven books, several of which were reprinted over and over. Finally, in 1913 he was honored by the establishment of a Chair of Civic Design at the University of Illinois, created especially for him. He became the first in America to hold the title of Professor of Civic Design. From contemporary accounts, he was a masterful teacher,

"...From a wealth of experience and research he was able to emphasize and vivify every point touched upon with interesting citations and illustrations. His fund of knowledge ... seemed inexhaustible, and always his ideas in the classroom were given forth with a lively alertness, at time spiced with fine humor, and in terms of such masterly English expression as his students will never forget."<sup>85</sup>

Although Robinson was neither an architect, a landscape architect nor an engineer, he would be touted (as he was in Los Angeles, in 1907) as a "civic architect". The American Society of Landscape Architects, in a remembrance of his life credited his amazing success to "his alert mind, profound human sympathy, and determined purpose..." Although he was only an Associate Member, ASLA paid him extraordinary homage, when assessing his contribution to the profession of planning:

"In view of the extraordinary timeliness of his writings and of his professional efforts with individual American communities, he may, with reason be regarded as the prophet of city planning in this country."<sup>86</sup>

Ultimately, Robinson, Daniel Burnham and George Kessler (who would also be involved in Fort Wayne) owed their inspiration for comprehensive city planning to their great predecessor, Frederick Law Olmsted. He pioneered the way, and, as the new century dawned, also contributed his own creative efforts to the new field of comprehensive city planning.

When Robinson came to Fort Wayne, he had already completed extensive reports and plans for cities around the country. By 1909, he had probably visited and described over 20 cities, from Los Angeles, California, to Honolulu, Hawaii, as well as Denver, Colorado and Detroit, Michigan. His reputation as a master of city planning and his skill as a writer and presenter was well established.

### **Robinson's Contribution to Fort Wayne's Park and Boulevard System**

Charles Mulford Robinson brought the national cry for beauty and livability in cities to Fort Wayne. In addition to providing a sensitive and far seeing analysis of the problems and the assets of the city, Robinson richly detailed suggestions and opportunities, from a national perspective. The people of Fort Wayne listened and were fascinated. His report, printed a year later in 1910 was a

<sup>84</sup> Newton, Norman T. *Design on the Land, The development of Landscape Architecture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971, Pp.413-415. and "A Minute..." *Landscape Architecture* 9, July 1919.

<sup>85</sup> Professor Frederick N. Evans, quoted in "A Minute..." P. 98.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p. 99.



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popular document. It was divided into eight sections: The Business Streets; The Official Quarter; Approaches to the New Station; An Industrial District; Public Market; Residence Streets; Improvement of Parks; River Drive and Parkway System. In each section he carefully sought to describe conditions and make both general and specific recommendations which could be further developed and carried out in the future.

Robinson believed that the goal of every city should be a "well-thought out, artistically conceived general plan." In his 123-page report for Fort Wayne he put forward many ideas to continue to improve civic beauty. He recommended creating an industrial sector at a location where the smoke would not pollute the city. New codes for building height and set backs would protect light and air in the future and assure room for expansion of streets. In the business sector he recommended the consolidation of street lights, signage and objects to reduce sidewalk clutter. He espoused good pavement, kept in repair, clean alleys and amenities, such as shelters for the trolleys and comfort stations. He advocated an ordinance to reduce smoke from factories. Recommendations for the civic center would include a new railroad station and plaza. In the residential areas he encouraged opening up lawns that faced on boulevards, greater set backs, moving poles to alleys, interconnection of streets, designed residential development and the planting of trees, and more trees.

The parks of Fort Wayne also received his attention, including recommendations for additional land, the use of professional designs for parks (at Reservoir and Lawton), considerable additions for playground areas (perhaps under the auspices of the Education Board), and public attractions, for example, music in the parks.

Although Robinson never saw himself as a landscape designer, and thus presented his reports as conceptual, rather than finished designs, he included in the back of the printed report a plan, adapted over a typical illustrated map by R. L. Polk & Co. (See Figure 1). On this map he showed some recommended river drives (parkways), several boulevards, as well as park additions. Specifically, the map contains three graphic illustrations: Existing Parks & Drives, Proposed River Drives & Park Additions and Proposed Boulevards.

The existing parks and drives included East Swinney, the north half of Lawton, parts of Lakeside, McCulloch, Reservoir, Hayden, Old Fort and Weisser Parks. In addition, park space was identified in the north half of Guldin Playground and a site which is in present day Headwaters Park. Existing drives included land along the east side of the St. Joseph River (St. Joe Boulevard) and along the north bank of the Maumee (then, as now, Edgewater Avenue) which continued to present day Anthony Boulevard (then called Walton.) Two existing narrow strips of green space were located along either bank of the St. Mary's River beginning at Main Street and extending south/southwest.

Proposed river drives and park additions shown on the map included park additions to Swinney, as well as land north of the St. Mary's River and south of Fair Street. Lawton Park would be expanded east to Spy Run Avenue, south to the St. Mary's River and west to Clinton Street. River drives extended well beyond the existing city limits, including both sides of the St. Joseph River in the north, along the south bank of the St. Mary's River and on both sides from Swinney Park south to well beyond the city limits. The latter was a far-sighted proposal which later was accommodated with the development of Foster Park.

Suggestions for boulevards in the Robinson sketch would create a loop drive and connections to the rivers from the east and south side of town. A boulevard along Anderson and Tennessee Avenues would connect Lawton Park, the St. Joseph River and Lakeside Park. Walton (now Anthony) would become a primary north south boulevard on the east side of town. Pontiac Street would be converted to a boulevard from Walton (Anthony) in the east to south of Reservoir Park,

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where two north extensions would connect to the east and west sides of the park. West of the park, Pontiac would continue to connect with Fairfield and jog through Organ (now Kinsmoor), Beaver and Nuttman Avenues to connect to Broadway and the St. Mary's River. Hanna Street would be a boulevard from its intersection with Pontiac in the north to Rudisill in the south and the latter would be developed as a southern boulevard connecting in the west to the St. Mary's River. A short boulevard along W. Superior Street would connect the Guldlin greenspace to the Wells Street bridge greenspace, continuing north along Calhoun to the river.

True to the principals of the coordinated "City Beautiful" ethic, he espoused an interconnected system of parkways, parks and streets. Most importantly, he stressed the acquisition and development of park lands along the three rivers. He recognized this great natural geography, unique to Fort Wayne: "...in parking the river banks, and putting drive and walk(s) along their edge, Fort Wayne will be turning to account its greatest natural asset, and developing its own proper individuality – in which, so far as this is gracious, rests the charm of every town." As others would stress later, Robinson made a strong case for the improved property values which would accrue from such publicly developed land. Then, he urged the community to put heart in their slogan: "*Fort Wayne with Might and Main*", and quoted from a recent similar report rendered in Boston:

"The mental attitude of the citizens of any community towards its growth and future prosperity is an element of no mean importance in the shaping of its destiny. Confidence and civic courage have frequently had the power to achieve that which doubt and hesitation would have rendered an impossibility."<sup>87</sup> The determined citizens of Fort Wayne would not disappoint him.

Robinson planted the seeds which would make Fort Wayne's Civic Awakening grow into a full-fledged plan. But he accomplished more as well. Overall, Robinson's plan fulfilled the City Beautiful philosophy of a comprehensive, cooperative organization for city-wide improvements. Like Burnham and Olmsted's work at the Columbian World's Fair in Chicago, it demonstrated ways that all elements could work together for the benefit of the citizens.

Robinson brought a nationally recognized ability and perspective to his work in Fort Wayne. He set the stage for more fully developed plans, which in his view would be developed by professional designers of the highest caliber. Like others that would follow him, he set a standard for excellence and beauty. The bar was high. It was obviously the plan and purpose of those who helped bring him to the city to achieve a strong beginning for Fort Wayne's Park and Boulevard System. The plan was well received in the community. The local *Journal-Gazette* reported that it was

"easily the most beautiful book ... for exploiting...the virtues and possibilities of a city," and continued, "Mr. Robinson has evolved first of all a beautiful whole." The newspaper also put it in perspective, saying that the plan was "the crowning result of the civic improvement idea which has been growing and waxing stronger and stronger during the last four years."

Within only one year after the publication of Robinson's printed report and map, the Board of Park Commissioners would hire a nationally known landscape designer to fulfill and expand upon its recommendations.

Within only a few years of its creation, the independent Board of Park Commissioners had set wheels in motion to involve nationally known planners in the development of a new plan for Fort Wayne. This same board would continue to influence local city planning for many more years, serving as a de facto plan commission until Indiana law enabled the creation, in the 1920s of a formal Plan Commission for the city.

<sup>87</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson,

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## LOCAL SUPPORT FOR ACTION

The campaign for a "City Awakening" was building momentum. About In August of 1910, a rally for city beautification was held. The *Fort Wayne Daily News* called it a "grand success". With enthusiasm and attendance higher than expected it seemed clear that the people of Fort Wayne were ready to heed Robinson's call. Local leaders reinforced the rhetoric of Robinson and Zueblin. C. H. Worden described the wonderful things that had been done in the cities of Europe. Robert B. Hanna, Fort Wayne Postmaster and Secretary of the Commercial Club called beautification "an investment," saying that it would work "wonders for the happiness and health of the people" and develop "a pride for their city that nothing else could command." Later that month, forty Fort Wayne leaders visited Indianapolis to view the city improvements underway in the state capital. They were advised: "Remember that every dollar invested will add ten dollars to your realty,"<sup>88</sup>

In September, George Kessler was invited by the Commercial Club of Fort Wayne to visit and help promote a bond issue for purchase of the riverbanks. He declared that they had the "opportunity of creating the finest city in the country," and stated that other cities "would be willing to spend vast sums of money to secure what you already possess: three large streams radiating to every part of your city from a central point." He urged them to "purchase every foot of the river banks on both sides and then proceed as you have started with a well defined plan."<sup>89</sup>

## A River Front Commission

Concern for the condition of the rivers had been presented in 1909 by Robert Hanna. He called them the "Saints of Fort Wayne", proposing a scheme of river "boulevards" as a solution.<sup>90</sup> Robinson had identified the appalling conditions of the rivers and their banks, as well as recommending that the rivers were Fort Wayne's most important and unique asset for civic improvement. The Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners recognized the urgent need for the "purification of the waters of our three rivers, long used as open sewers, and the ridding of our river banks of the disease-breeding and slum-appearing conditions prevailing along nearly their entire length of nine miles within the limits of the city."<sup>91</sup>

To address this atrocious condition, a River Front Commission was formed. They decided to employ "the very best expert advice and service the country afforded,". They voted unanimously to recommend that the Board of Park Commissioners hire the "widely known landscape architect, Mr. George Kessler of St. Louis and Kansas City, to prepare...a complete system of Parks, Boulevards, Driveways and River Bank Improvement, sufficient for the city's needs for many years to come." With the support of the public, new commissions in place and a rush of public enthusiasm, Kessler's plan would prove to be the culmination of actions which had been initiated, developed and promoted by local citizens. Fertile ground had been planted through the persuasive rhetoric of Zeublin, and Hanna. The dedication of men like Worden, and Foster had further nourished the idea of a new, beautiful Fort Wayne. Charles Mulford Robinson, with his gentle insight, had planted fields of seeds. Now, it would be up to the consummate planner and gardener, George Kessler to make the hopes of Fort Wayne bear fruit – to become real.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Baas & Jones, p. 8.

<sup>89</sup> *The Fort Wayne News*, September 13, 1910, quoted in Baas & Jones., P. 8.

<sup>90</sup> *The Fort Wayne News*, February 2, 1909, quoted in Baas & Jones, p. 7

<sup>91</sup> Seventh Annual Report, Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, p. 11, quoted in Baas & Jones, p. 39.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, Pp. 10-12.



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## GEORGE KESSLER

### The Kessler Layer

By 1910, George Kessler was a nationally recognized landscape architect and city planner. Born in Germany, but raised in America, he had returned to his native country at the age of 16 and completed an education steeped in German civil engineering and landscape gardening. His studies included training at the famous garden school in Potsdam, the Gaertner Lehr Anstalt, which had been founded in 1824 by the German landscape architect Peter Joseph Lenne. Lenne had been influenced by the English style, remodeling gardens at the Schloss Charlottenburg. Later he combined elements of the formal baroque, naturalistic English style and German horticultural displays to create a distinct German style, different from Great Britain, France and Italy. These principles would often appear in Kessler's later work. Following his studies, Kessler traveled extensively throughout Europe, including the principal cities of Germany and southern England.<sup>93</sup>

In 1881, Kessler returned to New York with his family. Olmsted's work at Central Park was complete, but the profession of landscape architect in America was in its infancy, with few practitioners and no formal courses. Kessler, with his training in Europe was prepared to become a leader in the field. He wrote to Frederick Law Olmsted in 1882 and the great landscape architect replied: "The only illustration [among your present work] of what I regard as the higher field of landscape gardening is ... the work of Puckler Muskau, which I wish much that I had seen." The elder Olmsted urged the young Kessler to "...be ambitious to be master in higher fields..." and to seek to perfect his knowledge and ability in areas broader than just landscape gardening. Olmsted suggested an introduction to an official of the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Memphis Railway Company. The same year, Kessler accepted a position with the railroad in Johnson County, Kansas, designing a park founded by the company and other similar projects.<sup>94</sup>

In nearby Kansas City, Kessler became involved in the development of a comprehensive park and boulevard system, including the long and difficult task of setting up a park board. In this effort he was supported by William Rockhill Nelson, interestingly enough the son of a prosperous Fort Wayne, Indiana farmer who had moved to Kansas City in 1880 and founded the Kansas City Star. With a new park board formed in 1890, Kessler appealed for a position as landscape designer. In 1893 he produced a report and plan for a coordinated system. It was a sophisticated plan which demonstrated Kessler's detailed understanding of the landscape and his love of nature. It was a landmark document for the time. By 1901 he had designed a similar system for Memphis, Tennessee, along with individual parks. In 1904 he was selected landscape architect for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri. He opened an office in St. Louis in response to the extensive commission. Projects grew rapidly, with the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard system in 1908, (which became a lifelong association), a similar scheme for Syracuse, New York, the groundwork for a park system in Fort Worth, Texas and a 1907 plan for Denver, Colorado's system. In 1906 he was selected by the park commission in Cincinnati, Ohio to design a new system and by 1910 he had begun work on a plan for Dallas, Texas. His proposal for that city, published the year that he came to work for Fort Wayne, reflects a growing awareness of the need to plan the "City Practical" as well as the City Beautiful.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Kurt Culbertson, "Landscape of the American Renaissance: The Life and Work of George Edward Kessler." Pp. 1, 6, 7.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-9

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., Pp. 25-30; Kurt Culbertson, "Kessler, George Edward", in Charles Birnbaum and Robin Karson, *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, New York: McGraw Hill, 2000, Pp. 212-215.

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When Kessler was engaged to create a definitive plan for the city of Fort Wayne his experience with comprehensive city plans was extensive. He brought more than twenty years of planning and design experience to the task, working with large and small cities and projects. By all accounts his manner was quiet and persuasive – eloquent, but couched in realistic language and experience. In the introduction to his Fort Wayne plan he appealed to the city's sense of pride:

"...no community can successfully compete with others of its class without amply providing open spaces for the enjoyment of outdoor recreation and building adequate and fine highways which may become the base line upon which good residence development will follow, which in turn creates materially better values and permanently maintains those values. ... The investment in this class of improvements becomes a real investment in real property." <sup>96</sup>

### The Plan

Building upon the plans of the past, Kessler's work is a mastery of comprehensive city planning techniques. This is especially true in the way that he has used the network of boulevards and other drives to frame the jewel of the center city and its natural waterways. The plan for Fort Wayne is a relatively compact and totally interrelated network.

The outer boulevards, Anthony, Rudisill, Lindenwood (Brookside in the Kessler plan) and State Boulevards, "frame" the central city, and the confluence of its three great rivers, as a work of art is framed. (See Figure 2, Kessler Plan). Kessler envisioned that the parkways along these rivers would further connect the existing nine miles of rivers which ran through the city with existing and expanded parks in each quadrant. In doing so, the plan foresaw an addition of 15 miles of park, radiating from and along the rivers alone. Further, new parks and additions to existing ones would greatly enhance the recreational opportunities available to every citizen, whatever their economic status.

From the beginning, the Park Board understood that the plan would be far-reaching – that it would recommend actions which would take years to complete. They saw that Kessler had faith in the future growth and greatness of the city.<sup>97</sup> It is no surprise that many of the recommendations of this plan have evolved and been fulfilled over the long period following its inception. They are, in some cases, still being implemented.

The plan, in graphic and narrative form, describes both present parks and parkways, as well as proposed parks, parkways and boulevards. The existing parks, as shown on the 1912 plan, included Lawton, Swinney (east half), Rockhill, Lakeside, Reservoir, Weisser, Old Fort, Hayden (now Nuckols), and McCulloch. A rectangular green space, now in Headwaters Park was shown, along with an unnamed green space on the north bank of the St. Mary's River.

Kessler recommended additions to Weisser Park to increase its boundaries so that they would be defined by streets, rather than residences. As Kessler put it: "Nothing detracts so from the good appearance of park lands as the existence of residence properties backing upon such parks," Seeking to increase the park experience available for residents of the north west side of Fort Wayne, and to accommodate growth in that area, he placed a large, new proposed park north of Pfeifer (now State) Boulevard. He mentions that there exists, to the north "a beautiful grove, through which passes a little stream fed by springs".<sup>98</sup> This recommendation was realized, although slightly north and east, in 1921, when 80 acres were donated by John Franke to create Franke Park. One of its most charming features is a grove, with a meandering stream wandering through.

<sup>96</sup> Seventh Annual report of the Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners, 1911, p. 39.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> George Kessler, *Report to the Board of Park Commissioners*, P.52



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Another recommendation was for a large new park to be concentrated in the southeast section of the city, where Kessler noted that several properties might be acquired. Because there was a possibility for several different tracts south of Rudisill and east of Walton (Anthony), no specific location was delineated on the map.<sup>99</sup> However, the realization of this part of the Kessler plan was made possible in 1936 when McMillen Park was acquired.

The plan also called for additions to the popular Swinney Park, extending a West section beyond the St. Mary's River (now West Swinney) and to the north (which did not occur). Kessler saw Swinney Park as "a property of considerable extent and in part very nicely improved," but encouraged the city saying,

"the proposed additions to its area will greatly enhance its usefulness and establish natural boundaries very much more satisfactory than its present border lines. The additions will incorporate further river frontage and on this larger area it is possible to create a beautiful park and to re-create some of the original beauties of the river frontage."

Kessler also recommended a great park at the point where the St. Joseph, St. Mary's and the Maumee River join. In addition to recommendations in his report, he created a separate, specific plan for this park, which would include an enlarged river confluence, as well as curvilinear circulation, ornamental plantings and a play ground. (See Figure 5). Unfortunately, this proposed park was never built. Today, the modern Headwaters Park, located to the west, in the deep bend of the St. Mary's River serves this function.

Like other City Beautiful planners, Kessler was concerned that the system as a whole provide continuous connectivity between transportation arteries, parks and the riverways, the latter through extensive parkways. He was also concerned that the amount of park land, at the time was too small to adequately provide for all citizens, saying:

"At present the city has 143 acres of park land and a population of about 66,000, meaning that each acre of park property must serve on the average 462 persons. This park area could well be quadrupled and not be out of proportion to the population."

Further, he was concerned that the locations of parks were not equally distributed for all areas of the city. In addition, he warned:

"Furthermore, the value of these (park) properties is much restricted...because they are detached from each other...(thus) not readily accessible to the general public."<sup>100</sup>

Kessler's recommendations for parkways included a massive amount of land on either side of the St. Mary's River, south of Swinney Park, extending well beyond the existing boundaries of the city. The physical plan shows additional lands south of Rudisill which today are represented by Foster Park. In response to this plan, 110 acres were donated for this large park in 1912 by Samuel and Colonel David N. Foster, fulfilling another goal.

Kessler was very enthusiastic about the potential for parkway development in Fort Wayne. He proclaimed the development of Thieme Drive and its overlook (designed as a model project by Kessler and built by funds provided by Mr. Theodore F. Thieme) as an example of "the class of improvement possible at many points which will give character to the shores of the streams." He also recommended that a strip of land from the northern border of the town along the St. Joseph River to its confluence with the Maumee be purchased for the St. Joseph Parkway. Maumee Parkway was the subject of several recommendations for additional land on the right bank, and between the existing railroad.<sup>101</sup> Much of these recommendations, like others in the plan, have their realization

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 49

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today in the Rivergreenway development. Rivergreenways today serve much the same function as parkways in earlier times. The slower meander of a bicycle is closer to the pace of early automobiles than to the rush of modern vehicles. In addition, early autos could and did maneuver on narrower roads, thus not requiring multiple-lane high speed accommodations in the fragile environment between river and residential lands.

When describing and recommending his ideas for boulevards, Kessler reiterated the importance of connectivity between parks and parkways:

... "the segregated, detached park lands which serve locally the several districts in which they lie, do not realize their full value unless properly connected by an encircling and connecting scheme of boulevards. "

He explained that the general plan (Figure 2) showed a complete boulevard scheme. He explained that without extraordinary costs these boulevards could tie directly all the parks and river fronts to both residential and business districts of the city.<sup>102</sup>

Kessler's plan called for a 100 foot boulevard along Rudisill across the southern part of the city, connecting southern St. Mary's River to Walton (Anthony) Boulevard, with intermediate connectors to Weisser and Reservoir Parks via Hanna. Anthony Boulevard would be a major north-south connector, emerging from Rudisill in the south and ending at State (Pfeifer) in the north. It would offer interconnectivity to the Maumee Parkway, Lakeside Park and Lawton Park via an interconnecting Tennessee/Lake boulevard. Kessler remarked that the recent construction of a "fine bridge" carrying Tennessee Avenue over the St. Joseph River would make such an improvement immediately possible.

The northernmost boulevard was to be State (then Pfeifer), envisioned for approximately 150 feet wide in the eastern sector and from the St. Joseph River west, to be 100 feet wide. Kekionga was envisioned as the connecting boulevard running south from the proposed north west park at State (Pfeifer) to Main Street. The realization of this plan, given the slightly moved Franke Park, is Sherman Boulevard, which intersects Franke Park in about the same way as Kessler's Kekionga would have intersected the proposed park in this area. A 100 foot boulevard was sought to the west, connecting State Boulevard at its northwest extremity and running south to Rockhill Park. Today, this is realized in Lindenwood Boulevard, although the northernmost portion of this road was developed later, as was the western part of State Boulevard which it intersects.

A connecting boulevard from Sherman (Kekionga) to Lindenwood (Brookside), like a similar road on the line of Cressler Boulevard to the south was not realized. However West Jefferson Boulevard in this area provides connectivity between Swinney and Rockhill Parks. Today, due to the work of a later master, Arthur Shurcliff, West Jefferson completely fulfills the intended function of Cressler, but it is also more practical and functional in its connectivity to downtown. A connecting boulevard from Reservoir Park westward to St. Mary's Parkway was also recommended but not shown on the plan.

Kessler held that Berry Street be used as a connecting boulevard between the Maumee Parkway in the east and the St. Mary's Parkway in the west. He mentioned that between the St. Mary's and Webster street, Berry was already a wide, well improved residential street (as it is today), with fine avenue trees, which would require only a more uniform condition of the sidewalks (now realized). East, toward the Maumee River, he foresaw both business and pleasure vehicles and recommended

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 53

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its "consistent improvement."<sup>103</sup> East Berry was later linked to Erie Street along the railroad line. Erie was renamed Berry and now connects to Anthony Boulevard.<sup>104</sup>

Kessler recommended that the 100 foot boulevard width, called standard, provide for a 40 foot roadway to provide for "all driving that may come upon these boulevards in the next twenty years." This would allow thirty feet on both sides of the roadway for "parking" – or tree lawns, with a six or even eight foot sidewalk and the balance in well kept lawns planted with avenue trees "on formal lines, the trees uniformly and properly spaced throughout the entire boulevard system." Roadways along driving parkways would be no less than 35 feet with sufficient sidewalk and lawn spaces on the private property side. Predicting that such boulevard improvement would pay for itself in increased property values he suggested that improvements might be paid for by the "abutting lands which receive the direct benefit" thus not involving public funds or credit.<sup>105</sup>

Kessler did not direct a great deal of his energy to the need for public play grounds. While suggesting small, block-sized grounds, especially in the manufacturing districts which lay south of the railroads, he urged that a material increase in the size of school grounds would provide for this need in a logical fashion. At the same time, he warned at the beginning of his report: "

"A community that neglects to provide local playgrounds for children in all districts, does not deserve added population or increased values."

For Kessler, steeped in the City Beautiful philosophy, recreation was not just the means to socialize young children, but rather it satisfied the larger need for natural spaces to walk, picnic, relax and drive that enhanced life for all citizens. Outdoor recreation was essential, and also included active pursuits. His plan brought together and purposefully tied through the boulevard system, existing churches and schools which could offer the kind of youth-oriented active recreation espoused by the growing playground movement. There are approximately five churches and two schools on Rudisill Boulevard, including one college campus. Four churches and three schools are located on Anthony and four schools on State Boulevard.<sup>106</sup> The culminating plan of 1912 was significant as an example of a design which addressed the growing need for recreation, for both children and adults, but in a way which was consistent with the City Beautiful philosophy.

## LATER DEVELOPMENTS

### Individual Contributions

Even before the full plan of 1912 was complete, Kessler had been asked to design an individual "demonstration" element, Thieme Drive along the St. Mary's River. He designed a scheme for a Three Rivers Park, also in 1912 (See Figure 5.) The same year he was hired to develop a plan for the new Foster Park, which had been donated by the Foster brothers, David and Samuel, although only parts of it seem to have been built.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, another giant of landscape architecture, Arthur Shurcliff (Shurtleff, the original spelling) was invited to complete work in Fort Wayne (See Figure 9.) Some records indicate that he completed a system plan, but no such plan has surfaced to date. However, he had influences upon several parts of the system, during the first decade after Kessler's plan. Shurcliff was hired in 1914 by local Fort Wayne planner, builder and attorney, Lee J. Ninde, founder of Wildwood Builders, to design a subdivision for them adjacent to Rockhill park, to be called Wildwood Park.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>104</sup> C. Smith comments to the nomination, May, 2010.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., Pp. 57-58.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., Pp. 49, 56 and Baas & Jones, P. 90.

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## ARTHUR SHURCLIFF

### First Generation American Landscape Architect

Arthur Shurcliff was an eastern intellectual, born in Boston in 1870 as Arthur Asahel Shurtleff, he later changed the spelling of his name to conform to its ancient form. He attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology, graduating in 1894 with a degree in mechanical engineering. He had at first intended to join the family business of inventing and producing fine surgical instruments, but after a conversation with Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and the Charles Eliot of the Olmsted offices in Brookline, Massachusetts, he moved toward landscape architecture. No professional graduate or undergraduate course in the field existed at the time, so Shurcliff put together a program of study at Harvard University under Eliot's guidance. He graduated with a second B. S. in 1896 and began work in the prestigious Olmsted offices.<sup>107</sup> Interestingly enough his time at Harvard overlapped with that of Fort Wayne planner, builder and attorney, Lee J. Ninde.

Shurcliff worked at the Olmsted office for eight years. During that time he worked on town plans for communities in New England and elsewhere. In addition he found time to tour abroad, studying significant places as part of his education as a landscape architect. In 1899, he also found time, with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to found the country's first four-year landscape program at Harvard. He would teach in the program until 1906. With the blessings of the Olmsted firm, he founded his own practice in 1904. He emphasized town planning, working in the Boston area, then designing industrial communities as far afield as Bemis, Tennessee. His long and prolific practice included public work for parks as well as residential suburbs, and large scale complexes. The largest and possibly the single most important project of his career came to him in 1928, when he became the chief landscape architect for Colonial Williamsburg, from its inception until he retired from the project in 1941. Later he also aided in designing Old Sturbridge Village in Sturbridge, Massachusetts. Shurcliff was an extremely prolific designer. Over the many years of his career, until his death in 1957, he designed hundreds of projects throughout the country.<sup>108</sup>

Shurcliff's contributions to the Fort Wayne system included designs for individual elements, such as a master plan for Swinney Park in 1916. He also proposed a route, at the request of Wildwood Builders, to connect West Jefferson Boulevard, through the proposed enlarged Swinney Park west of the existing park. It would continue, through the newly constructed railroad underpass on Illinois Road, to the northeastern edge of his designed suburb, Wildwood Park. This section of roadway is now called West Jefferson Boulevard. He linked and integrated most of this plan to the 1912 Kessler plan. His proposed "highway", the fulfillment of Kessler's Cressler Boulevard, was to have a park-like atmosphere with extensive tree plantings on both sides of the roadway. This design notion recalled other late nineteenth century urban parkways developed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and associates, according to historic landscape architect, Patricia O' Donnell. Although this roadway was completed in part by 1930, it was widened several times and by 1936 the modern route was in place, with a roadway which expanded, taking over areas originally designed for tree plantings (although some still survive in the east section, south of the right-of-way and in the west along old Illinois.) The changed 1936 configuration also curved through part of Rockhill Park, creating several

<sup>107</sup> Elizabeth Hope Cushing, "Shurcliff, Arthur Asahel (Shurtleff) in Birnbaum and Karson, *Pioneers*, pp. 351-356 and, Angie Quinn, "National Register Nomination for Wildwood Park:", draft, 2009, p. 47.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.



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small wedge-shaped islands presently maintained by the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department.<sup>109</sup>

Over the years, Shurcliff would continue to be challenged to sensitively design elements in or adjacent to the Park and Boulevard System. As a master landscape architect, he was eminently up to the challenge. In 1917, as part of his design for Wildwood Builders' Brookview residential neighborhood he designed a graceful curvilinear section of State Boulevard which connected parts of the street west of Spy Run Avenue. This enhanced the connectivity of the Boulevard between its larger, more formal setting to the east and the more modest sections in the west. In addition, this suburb includes two streets, Eastbrook and Westbrook which function as fully developed typical parkway drives through the Brookview neighborhood. (See Spy Run Creek (Brookview) Parkway.)

As Fort Wayne's foremost planning efforts matured Shurcliff continued to be involved in the city's efforts, serving as a consultant to the first Plan Commission in the 1920s. He was also contracted to design a plan for the hoped for Three Rivers Park, but it has not been found to date. His final achievement, and one of his last commissions, would be the design for Shoaff Park, a 184.5 acre facility, which was designed in 1955. Shurcliff worked with his son Sidney on the designs which were developed through 1956, the year before his death. The park represents a high quality, next stage development, in areas beyond the city limits during the key period of significance of this nomination.

The Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System is nationally significant as an example of City Beautiful inspired community planning which was developed by a public-private partnership of civic leaders, philanthropists and nationally-recognized masters of civic improvement and landscape architecture.

## MATURATION

Rapidly, the Park Board and the city began to realize some of the recommendations of the plan. In 1913, Rudisill Boulevard, from Hanna Street to the alley west of Thomas became the first standard boulevard construction attempted. Carl J. Getz, park superintendent and forester describes the tree plantings: "Two hundred and fourteen Oriental Plane trees were planted ... This is the first complete section of boulevard tree planting... It consists of four rows of trees planted along the entire length ... two staggered rows on each side of the roadway..." In addition, 37 Oriental Plane trees were planted along Thieme Drive. These were originally recommended in large numbers, but after a particularly cold winter, the forester recommends replacing them with American Elm trees. Later, these succumbed to the national epidemic of Elm disease.

Also in 1913, the Park Board began to address the question of additional park land, seeing the parks as active agents of social service. In order to serve the populace, and provide one acre for every hundred persons, the acreage would need to be increased from 227 to 700. During the next few years, with a World War waging in Europe and later American involvement, little acquisition was possible. After the war, with many of its proponents gone, the focus changed to outdoor physical culture, from the earlier "City Beautiful." Still, the acquisition of West Swinney Park, a goal of the Kessler plan, was achieved in 1918.

## OTHER DESIGNERS

### Lawrence V. Sheridan

<sup>109</sup> Angie Quinn, "National Register Nomination for Wildwood Park", draft, 2009, p. 37.



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In addition to contributions by Robinson, Kessler and Shurcliff, Lawrence Sheridan also performed work in the Fort Wayne Park & Boulevard System, although his work represented by resources in this nomination is limited to the design of the Gateway Triangle (Fort Wayne Welcome Garden) in Foster Park completed in 1928 (SM-FO-7.) Raised in Frankfort, Indiana and educated at Purdue University, Sheridan graduated in 1909 and went to work at the Indianapolis Parks Department as an engineer. After attending graduate studies at Harvard University's School of Landscape Architecture, he served as a planner of military cantonments during World War I. Following the war, he worked as a consultant to municipal and private entities. He was the consulting landscape architect at Indianapolis' Crown Hill Cemetery and for Purdue University from 1924 until his death in 1972. He is well-known for his extension of George Kessler's plan for the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System, after Kessler's death. In Fort Wayne, Sheridan was the designer of the Indian Village subdivision, among other projects. He was a well-known city and community planner who believed in adhering strictly to principals of community planning, including zoning, the dedication and expansion of park land, forecasting city growth and the correct layout of thoroughfares.<sup>110</sup>

### Adolph Jaenicke

During this era, a professional horticulturist and landscape architect, Adolph M. Jaenicke was hired as Parks Superintendent and Forester. Jaenicke served in this capacity from August of 1917 until his death in 1948. Born in Germany, in 1860, he trained in universities in Germany, France, Switzerland and England before coming to the United States in 1893. Prior to taking on his post in Fort Wayne, he worked for the W. Atlee Burpee Co. and the renowned Shaw Gardens in St. Louis, Missouri. In addition to his duties as superintendent, he designed or contributed to designs for many parks and park elements.<sup>111</sup> The most memorable and beloved of these is the Rose Garden at Lakeside Park.

### THE PLAN COMMISSION

In 1920 new state planning legislation enabled cities to create Planning Commissions. Fort Wayne created a City Planning Commission beginning in 1925 with its first meeting in March of 1926. The commission would contain people who had local as well as national interests and accomplishments in the new field of city planning. At the head of the list was Lee J. Ninde, who was elected the commission's first president.

Ninde was a Harvard graduate and attorney whose interest in real estate had led him to become a "community builder" and an advocate of city planning on the national regional and local level. After presenting a paper on City Planning at the National Association of Real Estate Exchanges in 1914, he was elected to the national board of the American Civic Association, subsequently named chairman of their City Planning committee. Through efforts with the National Conference on City Planning, Ninde was instrumental in the formation of the Constitution of the American Institute of City Planning in 1916. Initial fellows of the organization were a roster of pioneers in the field: Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Charles Mulford Robinson, George E. Kessler, John Nolen, Flavel Shurtleff and Lee J. Ninde. One year later, Arthur Shurcliff also became a member of the organization, although not an organizing fellow.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>110</sup> John Warner, "Indian Village Historic District" National Register nomination, pp. 19-20 and Baas & Jones, MPDF, p. 76.

<sup>111</sup> *Board of Park Commissioners Annual Report, 1956.* (With a retrospective of the first 50 years.

<sup>112</sup> Quinn, "Wildwood Nomination" p. 63.

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The Plan Commission also included Fred B. Shoaff, as representative of the Park Board. Shoaff had served since 1922 on the Board of Park Commissioners and would continue through the 1950s and beyond. Mrs. O. N. Guldlin was the woman representative and an activist with women's clubs and other activities. The Commission was entitled by law to a levy which would be included in the city budget. As soon as possible, Robert B. Hanna was named the permanent "consultant" to the Commission (this appears to be a paid position) and served in that capacity until at least the 1940s. One of their first acts was to invite Arthur Shurcliff to consult with them regarding a zoning plan and to determine how to deal with the newly annexed areas of the city and to further plan for automobile expansion in the city.<sup>113</sup>

In August, the Plan Commission determined to hire an expert to prepare a comprehensive street plan. At the next meeting, Robert Hanna presented a map showing river bank property now owned by the city and that which should be purchased immediately. Continuing to pursue the recommendations of a decade before, he was instructed to make a list. By December, the commission had determined to ask several potential consultants, including John Nolan, Bennett, Parsons and Frost, and Arthur A. Shurcliff (and others) to respond with costs for a street plan as well as a zoning plan. In January of 1927 they had received bids from six firms, for each of the two plans individually and both combined in one contract.<sup>114</sup> Arthur Shurcliff only bid on the street plan. Perhaps he was already involved in negotiations to begin work on the development of Williamsburg, a massive project. In addition, as a master designer, his interests would not necessarily have included the legal and technical aspects of a zoning plan. Thus the fact that a multi-disciplinary firm received the combined contract makes perfect sense (the Bennett, Parsons and Frost bid was also the lowest combined price.)

### **BENNETT, PARSONS AND FROST**

The Chicago firm of Bennett, Parsons and Frost (BPF) was selected to complete the joint project, having submitted the lowest combined bid. The namesake of this firm, Edward H. Bennett (See Figure 10) had been born in England and later moved to San Francisco. He studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1895 to 1902. Upon graduation he spent a short time in New York, with a prominent architectural firm, then moved to Chicago to assist Daniel H. Burnham, ultimately working on the famous Plan of Chicago (1909.) Locating in Chicago, he developed a substantial private practice with his partners William E. Parsons and Harry T. Frost, completing plans for many cities, large and small.<sup>115</sup>

Bennett, Parsons and Frost estimated that it would take between twelve and eighteen months to complete all the plans which would include zoning plans and ordinance as well as a street plan, including recommendations for track elevations, subways and river bridges. The final contract for the firm's work included, in addition to the extensive work for a zoning plan and ordinance, fifteen items to be completed including graphic and narrative forms of the street plan. It included items such as study and recommendations for Parks and Forest Preserve system, playgrounds, athletic fields and school sites.<sup>116</sup> If fulfilled, it could have become a third major plan for the city's park and boulevard system. However, the narrative portion, if ever received, has not surfaced to date and the graphic plan is not inspiring.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 64 and *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette*, March 22, 1926, Minutes of the Plan Commission, March 22, 1926.

<sup>114</sup> Minutes of the Plan Commission, 1926 and 1927.

<sup>115</sup> "The Plan of Chicago", Ryerson and Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago. [www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/research/special\\_collections/plan\\_of\\_chicago/drafts.html](http://www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/research/special_collections/plan_of_chicago/drafts.html).

<sup>116</sup> Minutes of the Plan Commission, April 14, 1927.

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From a review of the minutes through the 1940s it appears that the zoning component absorbed huge amounts of time and energy, resulting in a series of graphic maps and an extensive published document. In addition, changes continued to be made through public comment and input over a period of several years. One other component of BPF's commission, a graphic plan of recommendations for street widenings and improvements has survived, (see Figure 3), but as it appears today, it does not portray a unified vision of comprehensive planning, nor a vision of an "Ideal City." The primary concentration seems to have been to advance the speed of traffic. Proposed green space appears to be, in some cases remainders of the Kessler plan.<sup>117</sup>

### ROBERT B. HANNA

In 1929, Robert B. Hanna, as consultant to the City Plan Commission, prepared his own plan for "A Great River Park". Reflecting that the commission had ruled that each major item of the new city plan should be dealt with in a separate report, he selected for his theme the principal aesthetic feature: a great river park. The report reflects nostalgically on river history and the memory of water playgrounds created by former dams. Hanna recalls the period of "awakening" twenty years before and the plans of Robinson and Kessler, as well as engineering reports by Metcalf and Eddy and A. W. Grosvenor. He asserts: "Each and every one of these reports, whether dealing with sewerage, flood prevention or river-front beautification, recommends that the city acquire title to the river banks."

Although regretting that the plan for the great river park (Three Rivers) was not carried out during the twenty years that had past, he notes that much has been accomplished. By adding extensive new park lands with river frontage, and including water works grounds and river drives, he asserted that the city owns (in 1929) 10 of the 18 miles of river frontage (both banks) situated within the corporate limits and about three and a half miles beyond the city limits. Once more he heralds the call given by his predecessors: "the development of a continuous river park radiating from the confluence of the St. Joseph, St. Mary's and Maumee rivers and extending, unbroken, up and down these streams for several miles..." At the end of the report, he quotes from Robinson's classic work, *Modern Civic Art*, "Reserve for park development the stream banks of the community."<sup>118</sup>

### RECREATION AND HEALTH

Fort Wayne was not laggard in embracing the Progressive Era ideal that recreation was an essential part of a civilized city. During the second decade of the twentieth century, this notion was endorsed by civic improvement proponents such as Horace McFarland who declared in a speech given in Fort Wayne: "The child without a playground is getting ready for the hospital, the jail, and the graveyard."<sup>119</sup> In 1924, the city commissioned the "Fort Wayne Playground and Recreational Survey". This study defined recreation as "one of the most important functions of human life. It promotes health, happiness, good will, fair play, and tends to improve the spirit of neighborliness, good will, and loyalty." The survey defined play lots, neighborhood playgrounds, athletic fields, swimming and wading pools, tennis courts, and a minimum play space of 200 square feet per child. Typically, the private sector rose to the occasion, with generous donations and contributions. The Guldin Park is named after early exponents for children's health through active playgrounds. Mr. &

<sup>117</sup> Baas & Jones, p. 47.

<sup>118</sup> Robert B. Hanna, *Report to Fort Wayne City Plan Commission, Visualizing A Great River Park...* Fort Wayne, March, 1929.

<sup>119</sup> *The Fort Wayne News*, "McFarland Report", February 8, 1912, quoted in Baas & Jones, p. 87.

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Mrs. O.N. Guldlin donated the city's first playground in 1911 and Mrs. Guldlin later served on the first plan commission.<sup>120</sup>

In 1913 a state law made the creation and maintenance of playgrounds the responsibility of schools. Indeed George Kessler had also felt that schools should have a large role in establishing and developing these kinds of facilities. But by 1923, the responsibility for public playgrounds was returned to the control of parks boards. In Fort Wayne, the role of active recreation relied heavily on the schools and churches, but in the Kessler plan, these were closely tied to the boulevard system. Five churches and two schools are located on Rudisill Boulevard, four churches and three schools on Anthony Boulevard and four schools on State Boulevard.<sup>121</sup>

As the parks matured, throughout the period of significance, additional recreational facilities have continued to be a part of their offerings. Children's playground equipment (although not counted because of its transitory nature) can be found in every park in the city. Franke Park is especially known for children's programs, but the whole system heralds the ideals expressed so long ago by the planners and dedicated local citizens of the early decades of the twentieth century.

## CONCLUSION

The plan of 1912 remains an exemplary document, the most complete and unified such plan to be developed for Fort Wayne. A considerable amount of the elements of the plan, including boulevards to the east and south, individual parks and to some extent, the recommended parkways have been developed. In modern times, the recommendations for parkway development have seen fulfillment in the Rivergreenways along miles of developed banks – a sensitive modern interpretation of the philosophy and intent of nineteenth and early twentieth century parkway development. The boulevards in the plan are inheritors of the early planning innovations of Olmsted and others, as offered by practitioners such as Robinson and Kessler.

The Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System is eligible for the National Register as an example of a realized city planning effort completed in a public-private partnership over time for the benefit of all of its citizens. It reflects national trends in community planning and development as well as entertainment/recreation. The long dedication of its citizen planners to the ideals of the plan is unique and significant. By documenting and promoting this heritage, the community is once again reviving it. A pact between the leaders of the city and her citizens is being upheld: To provide access to clean, natural environments for recreation and relaxation to all, regardless of their station in life or their location.

The Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System is eligible for the National Register on a national level in the area of landscape architecture because it is the work, in all or in part, of several masters of planning and landscape architecture, whose reputation and body of work have established them, each in their own way, as leaders in America in their respective fields. The Fort Wayne System is reflective of the best work of Robinson and Kessler and of both early and late designs, spanning the career of Arthur Shurcliff.

<sup>120</sup> Baas & Jones, Pp. 85, 89.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90



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**Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

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We are grateful to the information provided in notes and comments submitted in response to the draft nomination by:  
Angie Quinn, ARCH, Inc.  
Don Orban and Creager Smith, Historic Preservation, City of Fort Wayne  
Paul Diebold, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, Indianapolis

**Internet**

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☒ Local government  
☐ University  
☒ Other  
Name of repository: ARCH, Inc., Fort Wayne

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** +/- 1,883

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Due to the complex nature of this discontinuous district, a combination of line segments described by points and polygons enclosing areas have been used to record the system. Parks of less than 10 acres are described by a single point.

Franke Park - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle, polygon bounded by:

1FR) 16 654000 4552950 2FR) 16 655400 4552980  
3FR) 16 655520 4551900 4FR) 16 654120 4551820

McCormick Park - Fort Wayne East Quadrangle, polygon bounded by:

1MCC) 16 660290 4547760 2MCC) 16 660540 4547530  
3MCC) 16 660540 4547530 4MCC) 16 660300 4547510

McCulloch Park - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

1MCL) 16 655440 4548140

McMillen Park - Fort Wayne East Quadrangle, polygon bounded by:

1MC) 16 659000 4546520 2MC) 16 659960 4546560  
3MC) 16 660000 4545700 4MC) 16 659000 4545620

Memorial Park - Fort Wayne East Quadrangle, polygon bounded by:

1MP) 16 658780 4549410 2MP) 16 659190 4549260  
3MP) 16 659220 4548880 4MP) 16 658820 4548840

Nuckols Park - Fort Wayne West and Fort Wayne East Quadrangles

1N) 16 657480 4549120

Old Fort Park - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

1OF) 16 656760 4549480

Reservoir Park - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle, polygon bounded by:

1RS) 16 656550 4547560 2RS) 16 656850 4547620  
3RS) 16 656880 4547320 4RS) 16 656560 4547320

Rockhill Park - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle, polygon bounded by:

1RH) 16 652820 4548750 2RH) 16 653300 4548700  
3RH) 16 653260 4548280 4RH) 16 652820 4548250

Weisser Park - Fort Wayne West and East Quadrangles, polygon bounded by:

On Fort Wayne West Quadrangle:

1W) 16 657280 4546750

On Fort Wayne East Quadrangle:

2W) 16 657720 4546770  
3W) 16 657720 4546510

On Fort Wayne West Quadrangle:

4W) 16 657300 4546500



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Williams Park - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

1WL) 16 656520 4546800

Parkways

Maumee River Parkway - Fort Wayne West and East Quadrangles

Follow west to east, connecting points, both on Fort Wayne West Quadrangle:

1M) 16 656900 4549550 2M) 16 657240 4549500

Connect above line to polygon, Fort Wayne East Quadrangle:

3M) 16 657500 44549850 4M) 16 657680 4550550

5M) 16 658160 4550550 6M) 16 657900 4550100

Connect above polygon to line, Fort Wayne East Quadrangle:

7M) 16 658280 4549680 8M) 16 658620 4549600

9M) 16 659170 4549700 10M) 16 659820 4549300

Spy Run Parkway - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Follow south to north beginning with polygon:

1SR) 16 656060 4550180 2SR) 16 656180 4550760

3SR) 16 656380 4550780 4SR) 16 656720 4550400

5SR) 16 656600 4549980

Connect to a line passing through point:

6SR) 16 655980 4551150

Connect to polygon:

7SR) 16 656260 4551820 8SR) 16 655820 4551820

9SR) 16 655800 4552350

St. Joseph River Parkway - Fort Wayne West and East Quadrangles

Follow south to north, connecting points in line, all on Fort Wayne West Quadrangle:

1SJ) 16 656780 4549620 2SJ) 16 657160 4550260

3SJ) 16 656960 4550800 4SJ) 16 656460 4551260

5SJ) 16 656800 4552120

Connect line to polygon, 6SJ is on Fort Wayne West, all others on Fort Wayne East Quadrangle:

6SJ) 16 657300 4552940 7SJ) 16 657980 4553220

8SJ) 16 658350 4553080 9SJ) 16 658180 4552780

10SJ) 16 657460 4552480

St. Mary's River Parkway - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Follow north to south, beginning with a polygon:

1SM) 16 656720 4549920 2SM) 16 655990 4550150

3SM) 16 655940 4549560

Connect a polygon to above using point 3SM:

4SM) 16 655170 4549160 5SM) 16 654990 4549220

6SM) 16 655080 4549720

Connect to polygon:

7SM) 16 654900 4548940 8SM) 16 654920 4548340

9SM) 16 653960 4548280 10SM) 16 653860 4548800

11SM) 16 654480 4549110

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Connect to a line:

12SM) 16 654570 4547100 13SM) 16 654820 4546220

Connect to polygon:

14SM) 16 654620 4546180 15SM) 16 654980 4546180

16SM) 16 655000 4544770 17SM) 16 655300 4544370

18SM) 16 655140 4544120 19SM) 16 654440 4544500

20SM) 16 653980 4544840 21SM) 16 653840 4545480

Connect above to points in a line:

22SM) 16 655980 4543420 23SM) 16 656220 4542400

Boulevards

Anthony Boulevard - Fort Wayne East Quadrangle

Points connecting a line:

1a) 16 658220 4552080 2a) 16 658540 4546000

Berry Boulevard - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Points connecting a line:

1b) 16 654900 4548900 2b) 16 656960 4549380

Hanna Street/Taber Street - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Points connecting a line:

1c) 16 656870 4547460 2c) 16 657270 4547480

3c) 16 657350 4545980

Jefferson Boulevard - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Points connecting a line:

1d) 16 653340 4548640 2d) 16 653880 4548480

Lindenwood Avenue - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Points connecting a line, south to north:

1e) 16 652940 4548750 2e) 16 652880 4550350

3e) 16 652740 4551000

Rudisill Boulevard - Fort Wayne West and East Quadrangles

Points connecting a line west to east:

On Fort Wayne West Quadrangle:

1f) 16 654850 4545940

On Fort Wayne East Quadrangle:

2f) 16 659020 4546040

Sherman Boulevard - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Points connecting a line, north to south:

1g) 16 655000 4551880 2g) 16 655140 4549660

St. Joseph Boulevard - Fort Wayne West Quadrangle

Points connecting a line, north to south:

1h) 16 657040 4551180 2h) 16 657040 4550720

State Boulevard - Fort Wayne West and East Quadrangles

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Points connecting a line, west to east:  
On Fort Wayne West Quadrangle:  
1i) 16 652720 4551000

On Fort Wayne East Quadrangle:  
2i) 16 658280 4551220

Tennessee Avenue - Fort Wayne West and East Quadrangles

Points connecting a line, west to east:  
On Fort Wayne West Quadrangle:  
1j) 16 656680 4550340  
On Fort Wayne East Quadrangle:  
2j) 16 658340 4550420

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

In accordance with National Park Service guidelines, and because of the complex nature of the areas covered in this nomination, maps drawn to a scale of 1" = 200 feet have been provided in lieu of individual boundary descriptions for each element. The Key Map shows how all of these properties are connected and provides the titles for each individual map. The boundary of each individual park, parkway (and its connected parks) and boulevard is shown in grey on these maps. In general, the outer property line of streets bordering parks or other elements was inclusive of the property.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The broad general boundary within which the individual elements of the Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System are encompassed is roughly, the same general area as the 1912 Plan presented by George Kessler. All of the elements included were either in existence at the time of the plan's development, were recommended by the plan (either in graphic or narrative form) or serve as a logical extension of that plan. For example, the area at the north extension of St. Joseph Parkway, including Johnny Appleseed Park has been included as a logical extension of that parkway. All of the individual parks, parkways and boulevards are listed in the Key Map. Individual parks which were in existence at the time of the Kessler plan include: McCulloch(3), Nuckols(Hayden)(6), Old Fort(7), Reservoir (8), Rockhill (9), Williams (11) and Weisser (10). Franke Park (1) is the realization of the proposed north west park shown on the plan. McCormick (2) and McMillen (4) represent fulfillments of the recommendation for park(s) in the south east quadrant. Memorial (5)\*\* The Maumee Parkway (I) was recommended and partially existed. Lakeside Park (I.i) was in existence. Spy Run Creek(Brookside) Parkway (II) is the logical extension of a parkway between Lawton (II.i) and Vesey (II.ii) Parks, both of which existed at the time of the Kessler plan, although the latter was not included on the map. St. Joseph Parkway (III) was recommended and partially realized at the time of the plan while, as previously mentioned, Johnny Appleseed Park (III.i) is considered the logical extension of the parkway. St. Mary's Parkway (IV) was partially in existence (Orff/Thieme Drive IV.v) and Swinney Park East & West (IV.vii) was also present, in part. Guldlin Park (IV.iv) was in existence although not shown on the Kessler Plan. Foster Park was the fulfillment of a Kessler recommendation and was initially designed by him (IV.iii), Bloomingdale(IV.i) and Roosevelt (IV.vi), developed as logical extensions of the parkway recommendations. Camp Allen (IV.ii), the site of a Civil War muster was present, but not shown and is located in an area recommended for park development. Boulevards include Anthony (a) which was formerly called Walton and recommended by Kessler and Robinson, Berry (b) an existing street recommended for expansion in the 1912 plan, Lindenwood (Brookside on the Kessler Plan) (e) which was a recommendation, Hanna (c) an existing street, Jefferson (Ontario)(d) and Rudisill (f), both recommendations as well as State (Pfeifer) (i) and Tennessee/Lake avenue (j) both of which were existing streets recommended for improvement in 1912.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Camille B. Fife, (WGI), Meg Storrow, Paul Lippens (Storrow Kinsella Associates, Indianapolis, Indiana)

Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System Historic District  
Name of Property

Allen County, Indiana  
County and State

organization The Westerly Group, Inc. date May 9, 2010  
street & number 225 East Main Street telephone (812) 273-8826  
city or town Madison state IN zip code 47250  
e-mail wgimadison@aol.com

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:**

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### Photographs:

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Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

#### PHOTO LOG:

Name of Property: **FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD**

City or Vicinity: **Fort Wayne**

County: **Allen County**

State: **Indiana**

Photographer: **Paul Lippens, Tony Gillund, Meg Storrow (SKA), John Warner, Camille Fife (WGI) Don Orban (Fort Wayne Historic Preservation)**

Date Photographed: **February, March, April, 2010**

#### Description of Photograph(s) and number:

No. 1 of 36. Franke Park. Looking north west through the Park Drive Bridge toward Pavilion No. 1  
(Map 1)

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0001

No. 2 of 36. McCormick Park. Looking north east from the eastern side of the park (Map 2).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0002

No. 3 of 36. McCulloch Park. Looking north east along the main central path of the park toward the bandshell at the center (Map 3).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0003

No. 4 of 36. McMillen Park. An image, looking south east from an area near the entrance allée  
(Map 4.)



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IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0004

No. 5 of 36. Memorial Park. A Photo, looking north toward the Olen J. Pond Memorial from the southern border of the park (Map 5).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0005

No. 6. of 36. Nuckols/Hayden Park. Looking north toward the north west corner of the park along its western edge (Map 6).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0006

No. 7 of 36. Old Fort Park. This is an image, looking east from the south side of this tiny park along Main Street showing the well and the commemorative stand with a background of vegetation (Map 7).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0007

No. 8 of 36. Reservoir Park. Photo image looking north from the south side of the park toward the pond (Map 8).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0008

No. 9 of 36. Rockhill Park. Looking southeast across the landscape of the park toward the eastern end (Map 9).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0009

No. 10 of 36. Weisser Park. An image, looking southwest from inside the park, toward a part of the historic grove and showing some of the residential properties in the background (Map 10).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0010

No. 11 of 36. Williams Park. Looking south east toward the bus shelter, showing some of the properties which surround this small park (Map 11).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0011

No. 12 of 36. Anthony Boulevard. Looking south along this boulevard toward an intersection at State and Anthony boulevards (Map a).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0012

No. 13 of 36. Berry Street. Looking east along Berry Street between Union Street and Rockhill Street (Map IVe).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0013

No. 14 of 36. Hanna Boulevard. Looking south toward the intersection of Hanna and Rudisill Boulevards (Map c).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0014

No. 15 of 36. Jefferson Boulevard. Looking east along West Jefferson Boulevard at the point where it curves, just east of the junction of Illinois and Main (Map 9).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0015

No. 16 of 36. Lindenwood Boulevard. Looking north along Lindenwood Boulevard north of the intersection with Illinois (Map 9).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0016

No. 17 of 36. Rudisill Boulevard. Looking east along Rudisill Boulevard approximately between Fairfield and Hoagland Streets showing the set backs and vegetation (Map f).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0017

No. 18 of 36. Sherman Boulevard Looking south along the boulevard south of Archer Avenue (Map g).

IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0018

No. 19 of 36. St. Joseph Boulevard. An image looking south from State Boulevard, showing the median, plantings and residential setting (Map IIIb).

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- IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0019  
No. 20 of 36. State Boulevard. Looking east along State Boulevard approximately between the intersections of Andrew and Meridian Streets (Map g).  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0020  
No. 21 of 36. Tennessee Avenue. Looking south west on Tennessee Avenue from approximately just west of the St. Joseph River (Map Ia).  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0021  
No. 22 of 36. Lakeside Park. Looking north east toward the Rose Gardens at Lakeside Park along Lake Avenue (Map Ia).  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0022  
No. 23 of 36. Maumee River. Looking north west toward a bend in the Maumee River from Maumee Parkway. (Map a)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0023  
No. 24 of 36. Spy Run Creek Parkway. An image, looking north on Spy Run Creek from the Fourth Street Bridge.(Map IVf)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0024  
No. 25 of 36. Lawton Park. Looking south east from N. Clinton Street toward the entrance to Lawton Park.(Map IVf)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0025  
No. 26 of 36. Vesey Park. Looking north west toward the entrance to Vesey Park( Map IIb) .  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0026  
No. 27 of 36. St. Joseph River. Looking south along the St. Joseph River from of the Tennessee Avenue Bridge.(Map IVg)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0027  
No. 28 Of 36. Johnny Appleseed Park. Looking east along the St. Joseph Parkway, with the St. Joseph River in the background (Map IIIc).  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0028  
No. 29 of 36. Foster Park. Looking south west toward the entrance to Foster Park showing some decorative plantings in the background.(Map Ivc)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0029  
No. 30 of 36. Saint Mary's River. Looking north west on the St. Mary's River from the pedestrian bridge between the Soccer Fields and pavilion 3 in Foster Park (Map IVb)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0030  
No. 31 of 36. Swinney Park. Looking north west toward the entrance to W. Swinney Park from W. Jefferson Boulevard.(Map IVe)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0031  
No. 32 of 36. Orff Park. Looking north east toward the memorial statue in Orff Park from the intersection of Rockhill and Thieme Drive.(Map IVe)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0032  
No. 33 of 36. Camp Allen Park. Looking north toward the basketball court at Camp Allen Park. (Map IVe)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0033  
No. 34 of 36. Roosevelt Park. Looking south west from within Roosevelt Park showing an internal walk or Rivergreenway trail. (MAP ivE)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0034

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No. 35 of 36. Guldlin Park. Looking north east at the entrance sign to this park with trees and lawn in the background. (Map IVf)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0035

No. 36 of 36. Bloomingdale Park. An image, looking north east toward the playground equipment in Bloomingdale Park. (Map IVe)  
IN\_AllenCo.\_FtWaynePark&BlvdSystemHD0036

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name A list of property owners has been submitted under separate cover.

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC.

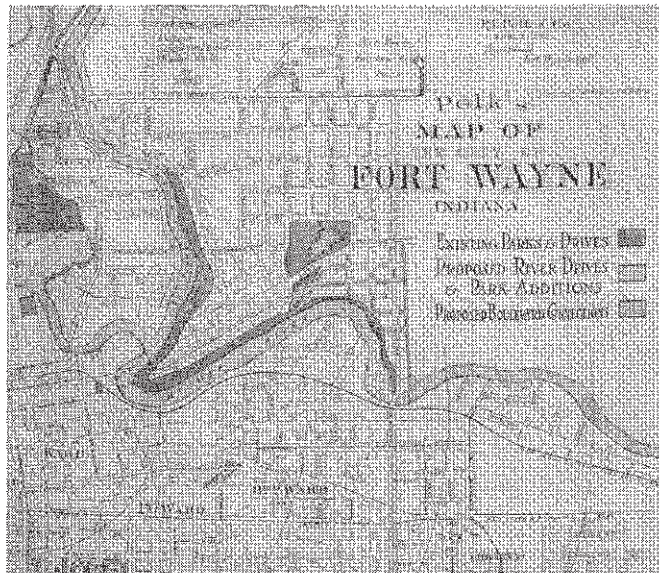
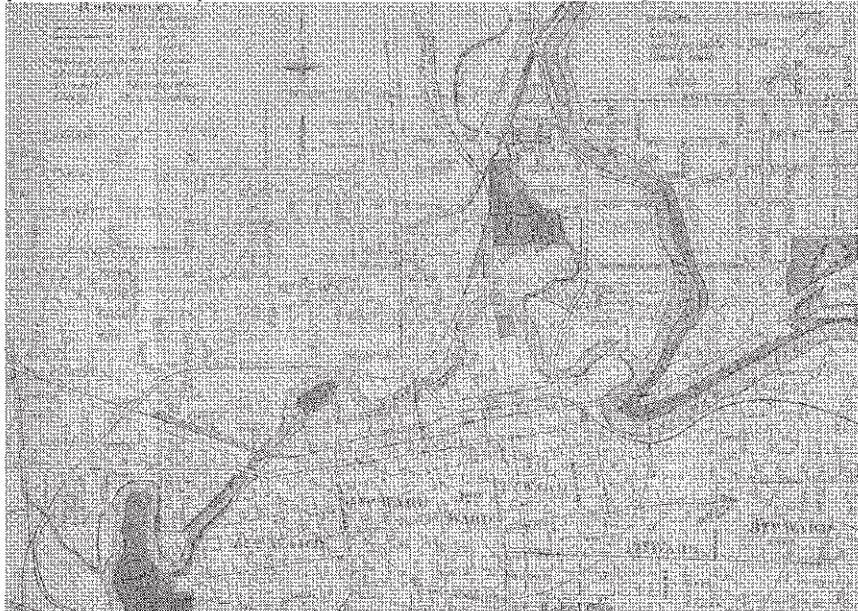
Figure 1: Polk Map, 1909 – Printed in C. M. Robinson's Report  
Figure 2: Kessler Plan Map, 1912  
Figure 3: Bennett Parsons & Frost Street Map c. 1929  
Figure 4: Adolph Jaenicke Plan for Memorial Park  
Figure 5: George Kessler Plan for Three Rivers Park  
Figure 6: Lithograph of General Anthony Wayne  
Figure 7: George Kessler Portrait  
Figure 8: Charles Mulford Robinson Portrait  
Figure 9: Arthur A. Shurcliff Portrait  
Figure 10: Edward H. Bennett Portrait  
Figure 11: 1854 Fort Wayne Map  
Figure 12: 1885 Polk's Fort Wayne Map  
Figure 13: Sanborn Atlas, 1885, Page 1  
Figure 14: Sanborn Atlas, 1918, Page 0  
Figure 15: Fort Wayne Map, 1955



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**Figure 1: Polk's Map with Additions by Charles Mulford Robinson – Inserted in the 1909 publication. (From the collection of Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Archives)**



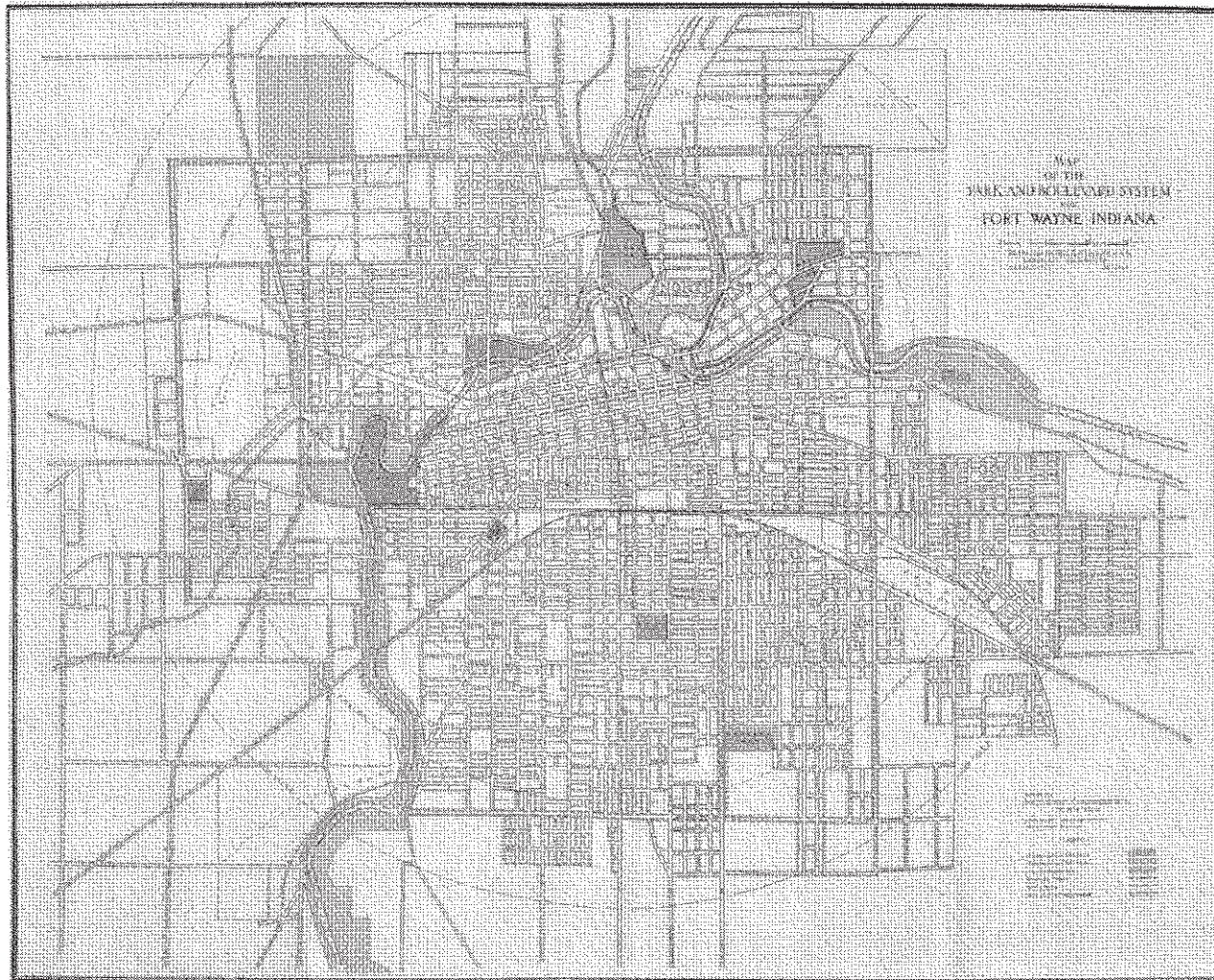
**Figure 2:**



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George Kessler plan, courtesy of ARCH, Inc.





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MAP OF STREET, ROAD AND RAIL LINES IN AND ABOUT  
CITY OF FT. WAYNE

PREPARED BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION OF FT. WAYNE, INDIANA  
AS PART OF A SERIES OF PLANS AND MAPS FOR THE CITY OF FT. WAYNE

SCALE: 1" = 1/4 MILE  
DATE: 1938  
BY: J. H. HARRIS  
FOR: THE CITY OF FT. WAYNE

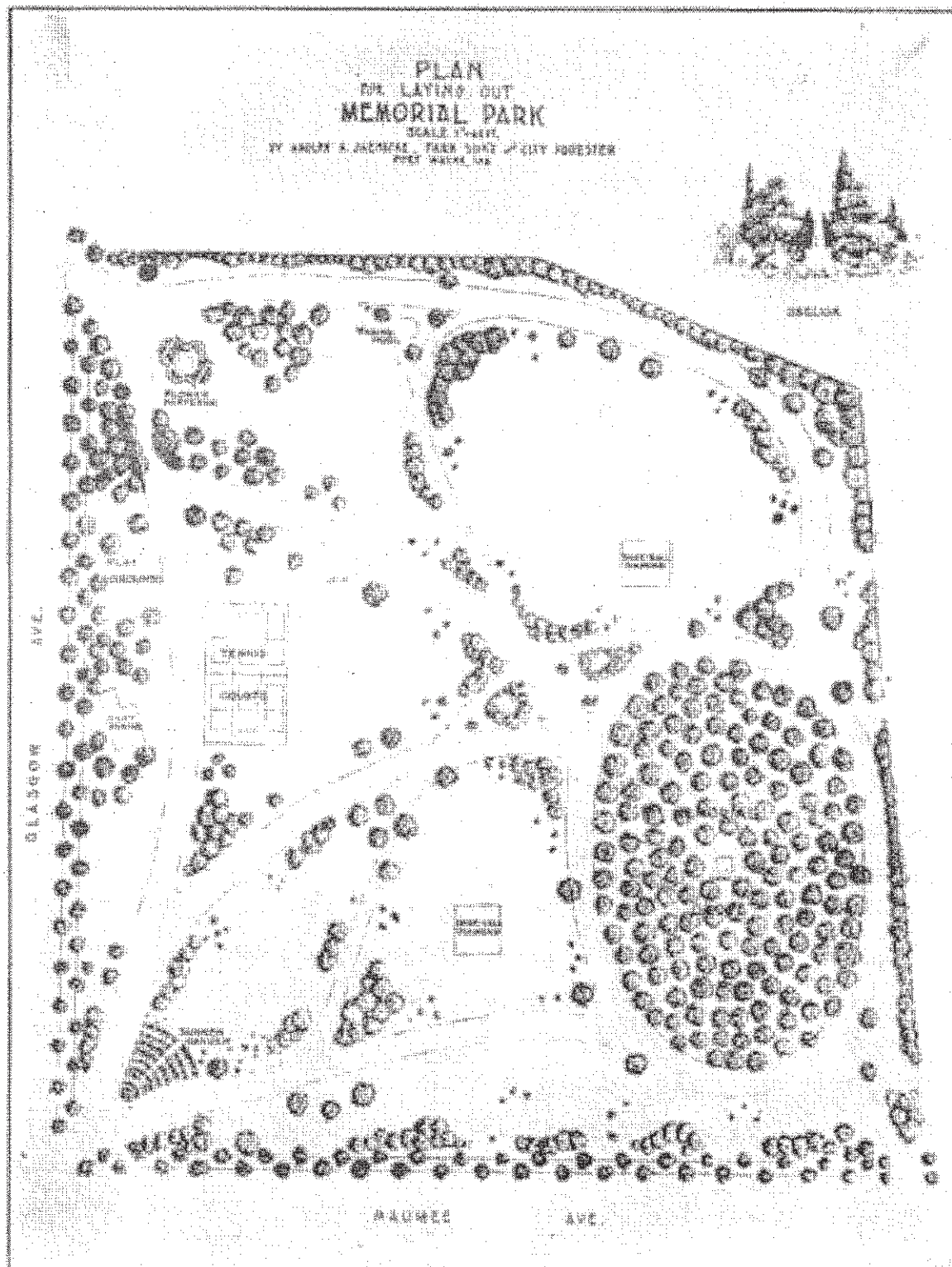
00-B 403 PLATE 3



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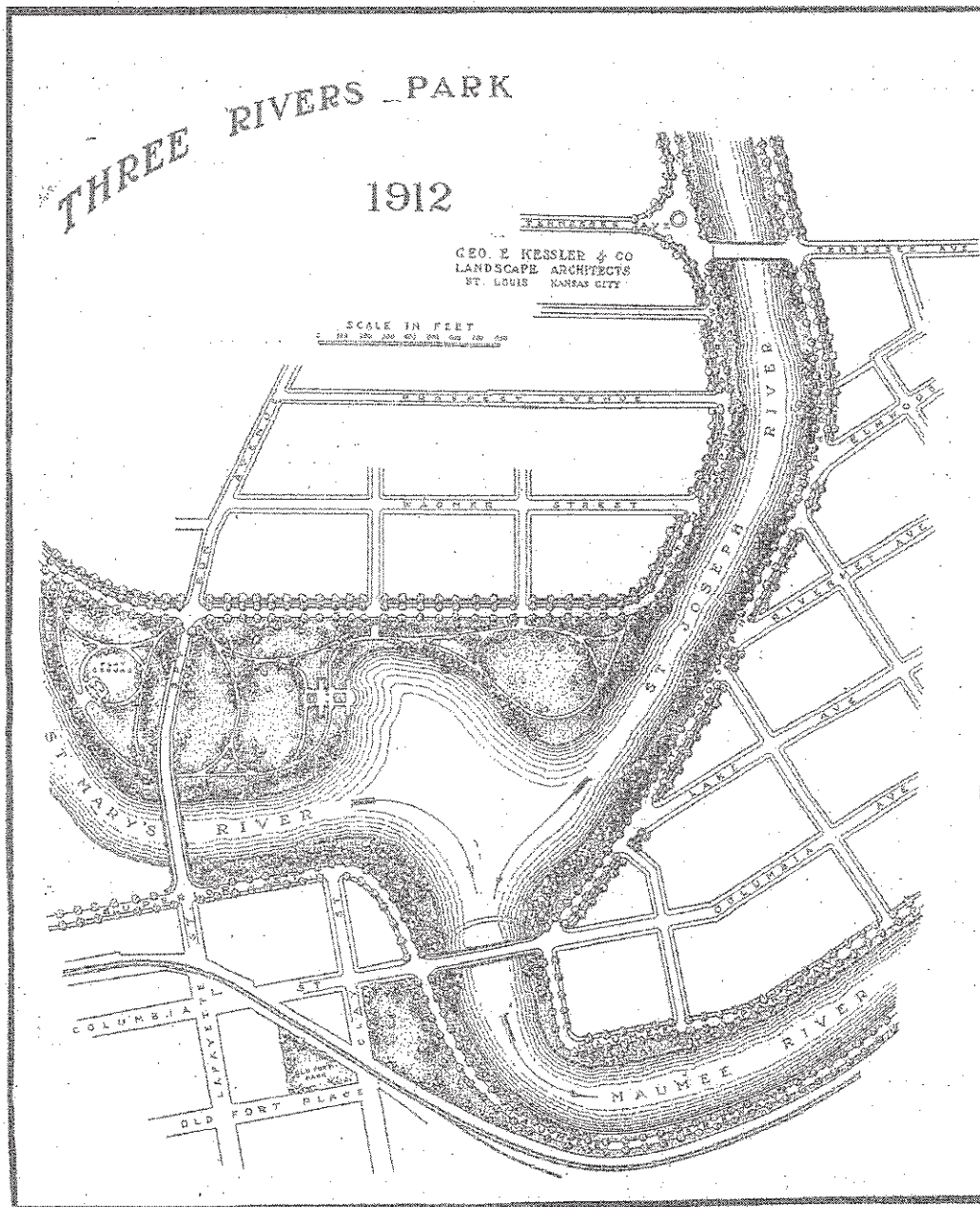
Figure 4: Adolph Jaenicke Plan for Memorial Park



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Figure 5: George Kessler Plan for Proposed Three Rivers Park





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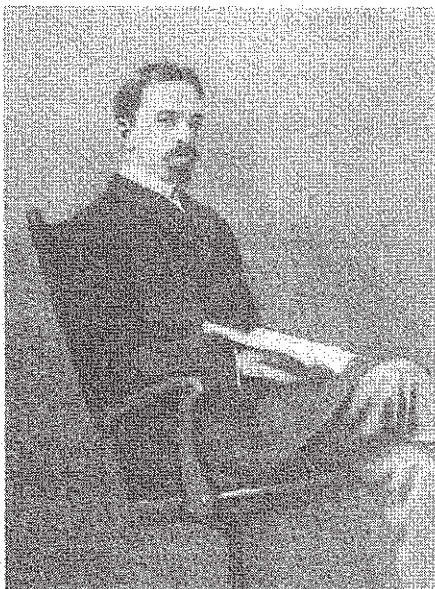
**Figure 6: General Anthony Wayne**



**Figure 7: Portrait of George Kessler**



**Figure 8: Charles Mulford Robinson**



Charles Mulford Robinson. From *A Plan for Civic Improvement for the City of Oakland*, 1906. Courtesy Frances Loeb Library, Harvard University.

**Figure 9: Arthur A. Shurcliff**

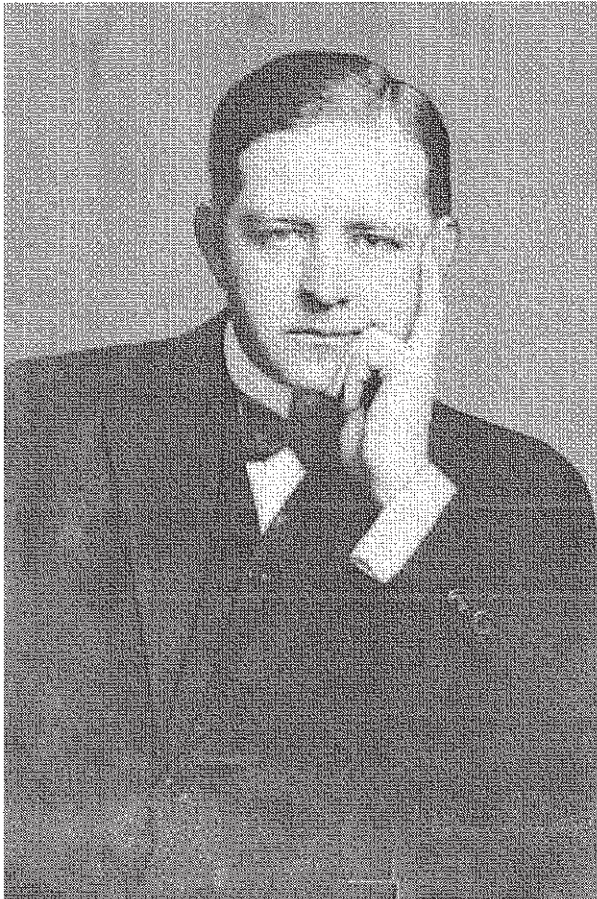


Arthur Shurtleff (Shurcliff). From *Country Life in America*, 1921.

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**Figure 10: Edward H. Bennett (Art Institute of Chicago)**  
[www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/research/specialcollections/plan of Chicago/drafts.html](http://www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/research/specialcollections/plan%20of%20Chicago/drafts.html)

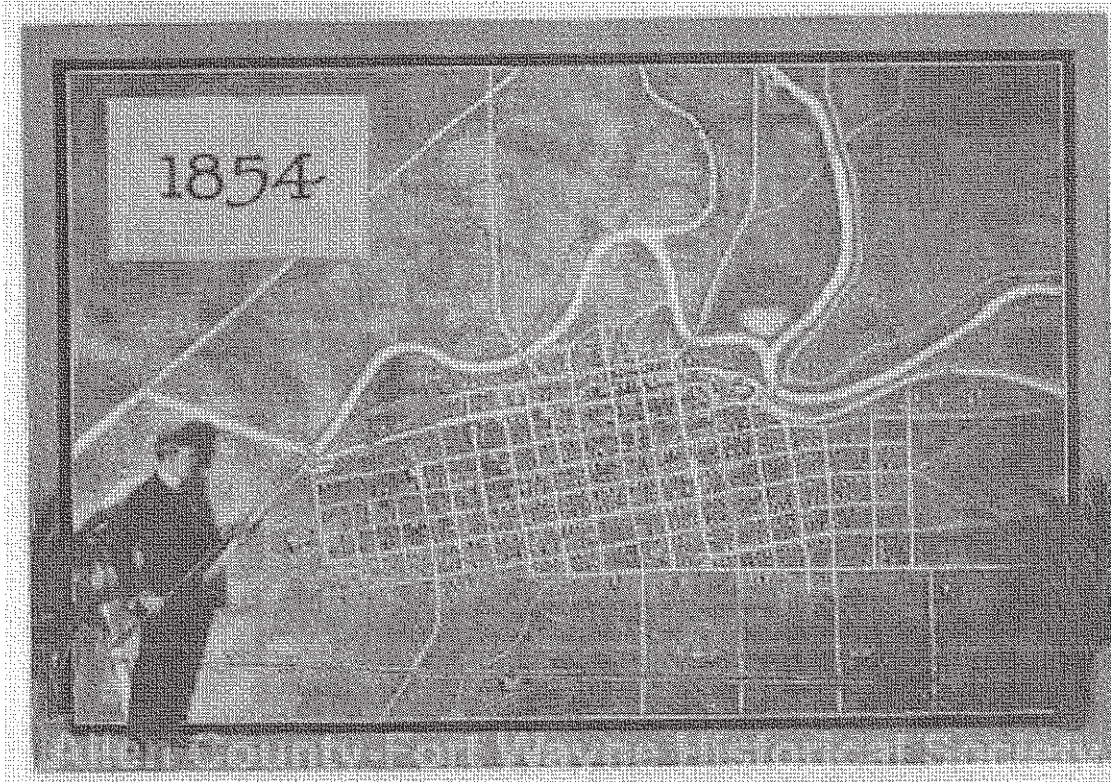




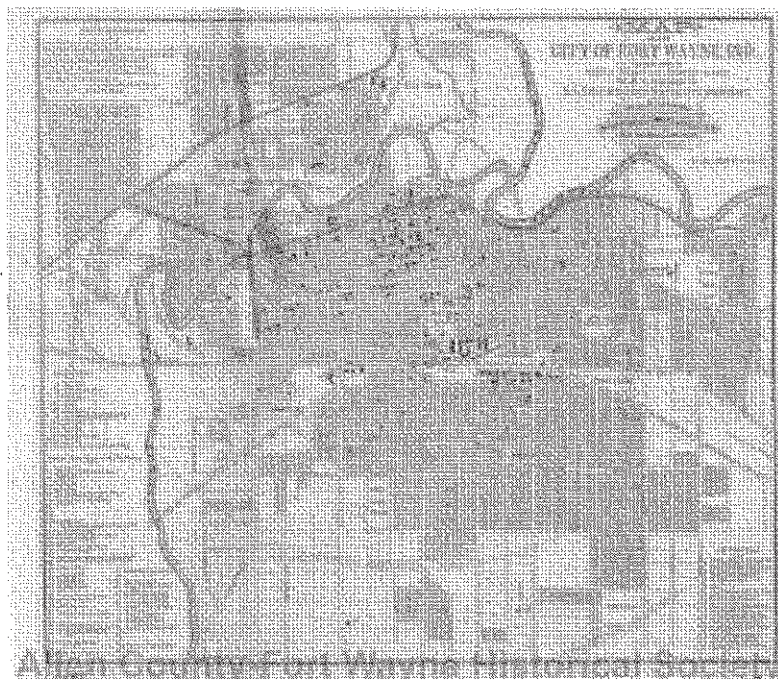
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**Figure 11: 1854 Map of Fort Wayne**



**Figure 12: 1885 Polk's Map of Fort Wayne**





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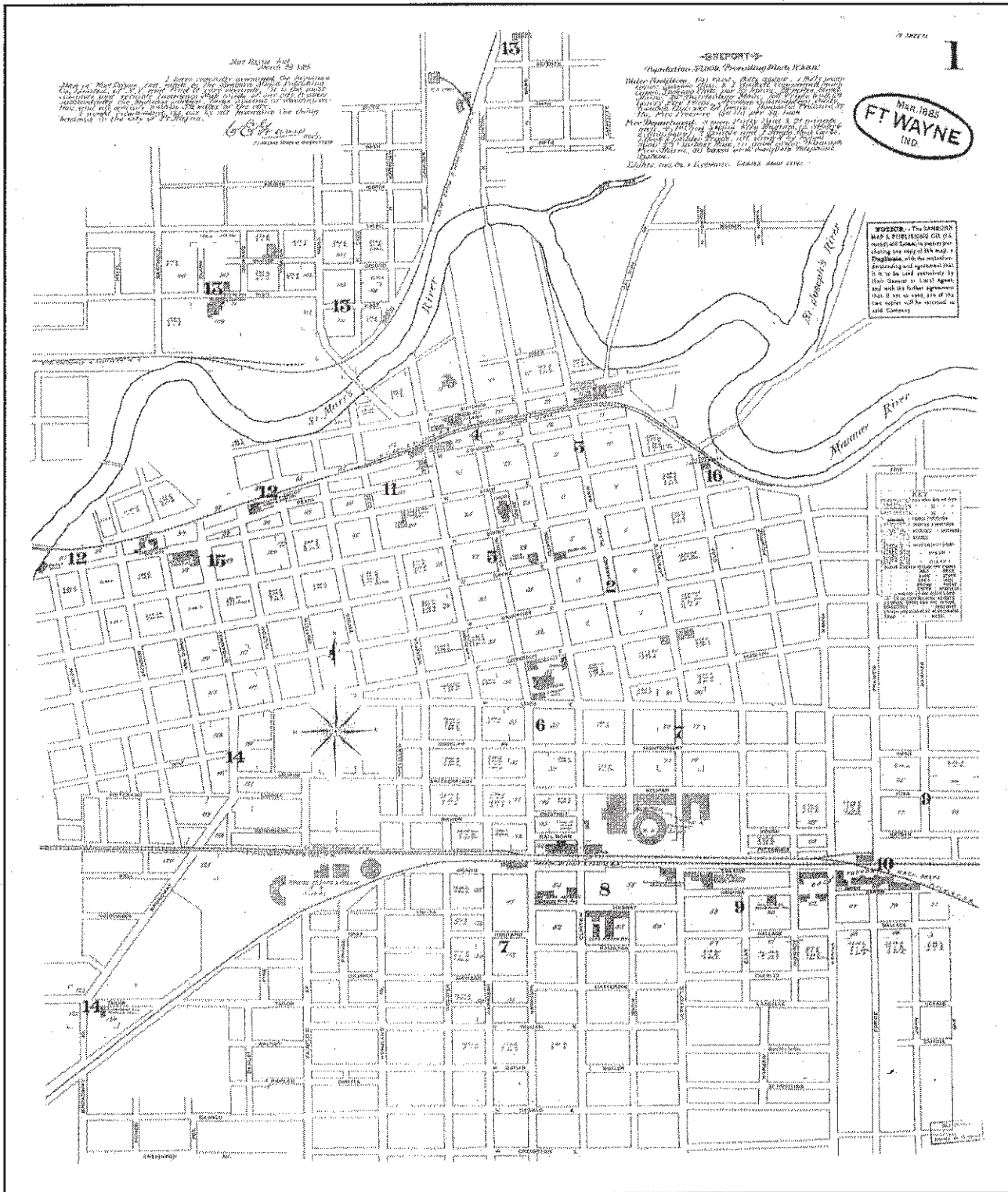
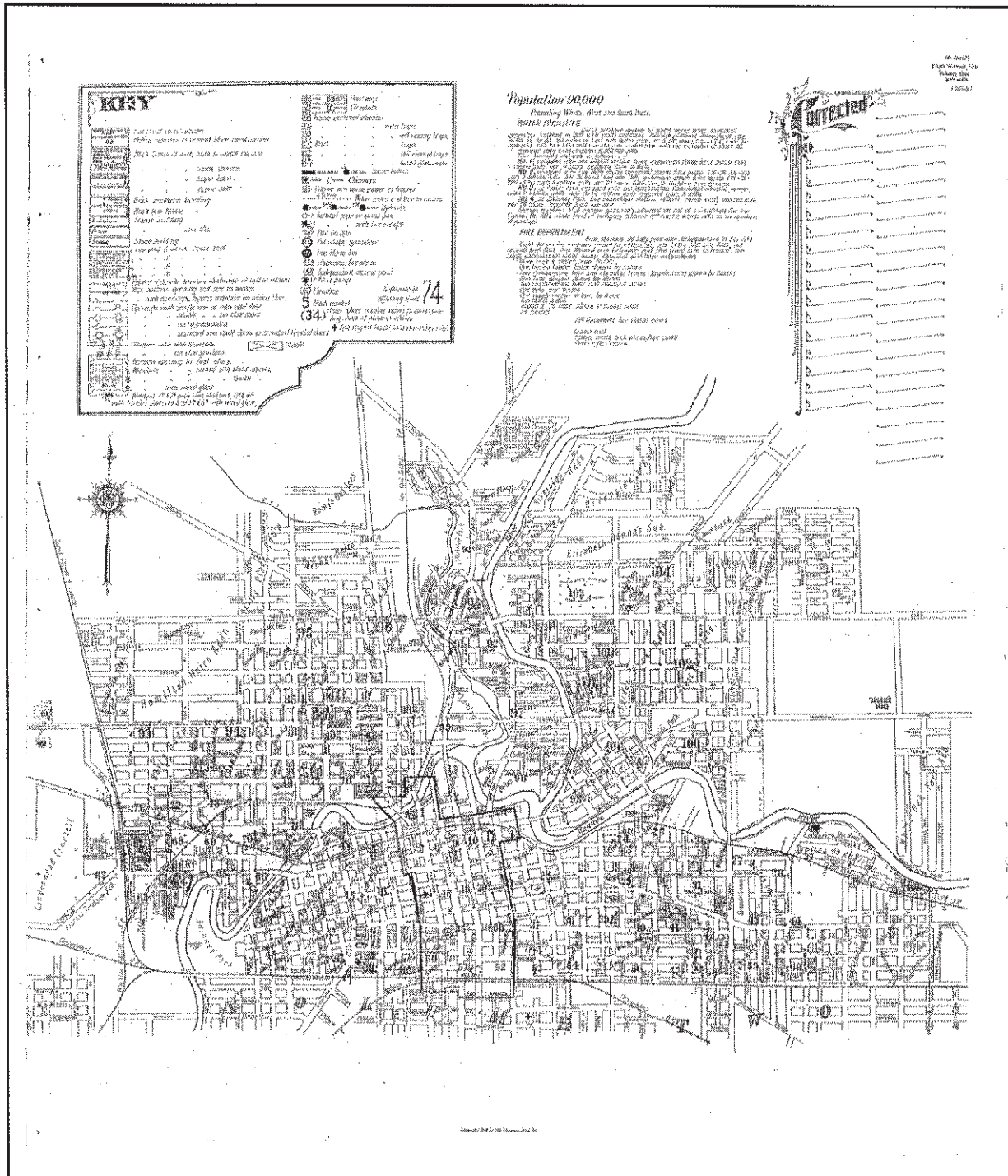


Figure 13: Sanborn Map of Fort Wayne 1885, P. 1  
Figure 14: Sanborn Map of Fort Wayne, 1918, p. 0



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**Figure 15: Fort Wayne Street Map, 1955 (courtesy of ARCH, Inc.)**

